

FARMERS' Quarterly

FEBRUARY
2017

National Farm Machinery Show Equipment & Winter Livestock Edition

Soybeans setting records for production



photo by Keeton Reynolds, Korte Farms

National Agricultural Statistics Service
via KDA

LOUISVILLE - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released the Crop Production 2016 Summary today, highlighting another record breaking year for soybeans.

"This past crop year had its highs and lows, successes and disappointments," said David Knopf, director of

the NASS Eastern Mountain Regional Office in Kentucky. "Soybean production was the highlight, setting both a record production and yield, while corn and tobacco failed to reach expectations."

Soybean production for Kentucky is estimated at 89 million bushels, down one percent from the November forecast and up slightly from 2015. Yield was estimated at 50 bushels per acre, unchanged from last month and up one bushel from a

year ago. Acreage for harvest as beans was estimated at 1.78 million acres, down 30,000 acres from the previous year. U.S. soybean production is forecast at 4.31 billion bushels, down 1 percent from the November forecast and up 10 percent from last year. The average yield per acre is estimated at 52.1 bushels, down 0.4 bushels from last month and up 4.1 bushels from last year. Area harvested is up 1 percent from 2015 at 82.7 million acres.

Corn production in Kentucky is estimated at 223 million bushels, down one percent from the November forecast and down one percent from the previous crop. Yield was estimated at 159 bushels per acre, unchanged from the November forecast and down 13 bushels from the 2015 level. Acres for harvest as grain were estimated at 1.4 million acres, up 90,000 acres from 2015. The U.S. corn production is estimated at 15.1 billion bushels, down one percent from the November forecast and up 11 percent from the revised 2015 estimate. The average yield in the United States is estimated at 174.6 bushels per acre.

This is down 0.7 bushels from the November forecast

see SOYBEAN PRODUCTION page 4

Grasslands Program to help Small-Scale Livestock Producers

WASHINGTON - U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Val Dolcini today announced that USDA will accept over 300,000 acres in 43 states that were offered by producers during the recent ranking period for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands enrollment with emphasis placed on small-scale livestock operations. Through the voluntary CRP Grasslands program, grasslands threatened by development or conversion to row crops are maintained as livestock grazing areas, while providing important conservation benefits. Approximately 200,000 of the accepted acres were offered by small-scale livestock operations.

"Producers of all sizes are interested in USDA's Conservation Reserve Program," said Dolcini. "This latest round of CRP Grasslands enrollment, where much of the acreage comes from small-scale livestock operations, shows that our nation's family farmers and ranchers

see USDA EXPANDS page 4



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SOYBEAN PRODUCTION *continued from FRONT PAGE*

and 6.2 bushels above the revised 2015 average yield. Area harvested for grain is estimated at 86.7 million acres, down slightly from the November forecast and up 7 percent from the revised 2015 acreage.

"The corn crop started strong," Knopf noted, "but faded down the stretch. It had the potential to be a record crop, but pollination and grain fill issues left growers disappointed."

Kentucky burley tobacco production is estimated at 107 million pounds, down three percent from the October forecast and up two percent from 2015. Yield was estimated at 1,750 pounds per acre, unchanged from October forecast and down 50 pounds from the 2015 crop. Harvested acreage was estimated at 61,000 acres, up 3,000 acres from last year's crop. For the burley producing states production is estimated at 140

million pounds, down three percent from last year. Burley growers plan to harvest 80,000 acres, up one percent from 2015. Yields were estimated at 1,747 pounds per acre, down 87 pounds from last year.

"Nothing seemed to go right for burley tobacco this year," Knopf said. "Delayed spring planting, too much summer rainfall, and poor weather conditions during the curing phase all contributed to the second smallest crop on record and the lowest yield since 1960."

Production of Kentucky dark fire-cured tobacco is estimated at 21.9 million pounds, down 31 percent from the previous year. Dark air-cured tobacco production is estimated at 7.68 million pounds, down 44 percent from last year.

Alfalfa hay production by Kentucky farmers is estimated at 540,000 tons, down 14 percent the 2015 level. Other hay production is estimated at 5.04 million tons, down slightly from last year.

USDA EXPANDS

continued from FRONT PAGE

can have a big impact on environmental conservation."

The most recent ranking period closed on Dec. 16, 2016, and included for the first time a CRP Grasslands practice specifically tailored for small-scale livestock grazing operations to encourage broader participation. Under this ranking period and for future periods, small-scale livestock operations with 100 or fewer head of grazing cows (or the equivalent) can submit applications to enroll up to 200 acres of grasslands per farm. Larger operations may still make offers through the normal process. USDA met its goal of 200,000 acres under this small-scale initiative. The new practice for small-scale livestock grazing operations encourages greater diversity geographically and in all types of livestock operations. Visit <http://go.usa.gov/x9PFS> to view the complete list of acres accepted by state.

Participants in CRP Grasslands establish or maintain long-term, resource-conserving grasses and other plant species to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat on marginally productive agricultural lands. CRP

Grasslands participants can use the land for livestock production (e.g. grazing or producing hay), while following their conservation and grazing plans in order to maintain the cover. A goal of CRP Grasslands is to minimize conversion of grasslands either to row crops or to non-agricultural uses. Participants can receive annual payments of up to 75 percent of the grazing value of the land and up to 50 percent of the cost of cover practices like cross-fencing to support rotational grazing or improving pasture cover to benefit pollinators or other wildlife.

USDA selects offers for enrollment based on six ranking factors: (1) current and future use, (2) new farmer/rancher or underserved producer involvement, (3) maximum grassland preservation, (4) vegetative cover, (5) environmental factors, and (6) pollinator habitat. Offers not selected in a ranking period are rolled over into the next ranking period.

Small livestock operations or other farming and ranching operations interested in participating in CRP Grasslands should contact their local FSA office. To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>. To learn more about FSA's conservation programs, visit:

www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation.

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USDA

Apple Product Purchase

Program announced

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced plans to purchase apple products.

A solicitation will be issued in the near future. All offers must be submitted electronically through the Web-Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM) website at <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=WBSCM>. Offers submitted by any means other than WBSCM will be considered non-responsive.

Offerors are urged to review all documents as they pertain to this program, including the AMS Master Solicitation for Commodity Procurements dated January 1, 2017; the applicable Commodity Specification(s) identified in the subsequent Solicitation(s); and the Qualification Requirements for Prospective Vendors dated October 2014. These documents are available on the AMS Commodity Procurement website at www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food.

Offerors must read all terms of the applicable Solicitation(s) when it is issued. To receive electronic (e-mail) notification of the issuance of these solicitations, see the "Stay up to date on USDA food purchases" available on the AMS Commodity Procurement website.

Inquiries may be made by telephoning the Contract Specialist, David Cottrell at (202) 260-9183 or addressing the Contracting Officer, USDA/AMS Commodity Procurement Staff, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, STOP 0239, Washington, DC 20250-0256. An electronic version of this Purchase Announcement can be found at the Commodity Procurement Website: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food>.

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Kentucky Tobacco Still No. 1 For Some Farm Families

There is no doubt Kentucky agriculture has a long history in producing the best tobacco in the world and growers have done so for generations.

Even as markets have changed, there are still farm families that depend on it to be the main source of income for their operations.

Scott and Shea Lowe are an example of that. Their dark, fire-cured tobacco is the number-one cash crop on their Calloway County farm and they've made it that way being first generation producers.

While that is a little unusual, the Lowe's have learned quickly and grown their acreage steadily over the last 14 years.

"There is more labor and time spent in dark fired tobacco, obviously to fire-cure it takes more time and you have to handle it easier but it's a unique crop and highly profitable to grow," said Scott.

He also said the market demand for dark tobacco has actually seen an increase benefiting an area of the state where the vast majority of the nation's crop is being produced. Kentucky not only ranks first nationally in burley production but first in fire-cured tobacco, as well.

Scott pointed out it takes experience to learn how to produce the crop well and in the beginning their operation began in a small way.

"It takes years to master growing it and lots of trial and error especially in my case being a first generation farmer," he said. "I started my first tobacco crop in 2002 with two acres and now, we're at 100 acres."

And in an era of contract-growing, Scott said he, of course started small, but the tobacco companies have liked his crops and the Lowe's have been able to increase those contracts steadily.

"There are going to be years when you see decreases and those when you see increases. This year is going to be a decrease-year for the companies mainly because there was a lot of tobacco grown over contracted pounds in 2015," he said.

Scott noted that this decline is likely a bump in the road for maybe a season or two but he feels optimistic about the market in general and while the number of tobacco producers has decrease since the federal quota buyout in 2004, he said he would not hesitate to increase the farm's production by 50 to 100 acres.

The Lowe's grow row crops and raise cattle but, on a per-acre basis, dark tobacco is "way more profitable," said Scott. "As far as the dark tobacco industry and the location of the dark tobacco industry in West Kentucky goes, it's still the main crop for the agriculture community."

KFB Ag Facts

Kentucky ranks 1st in burley tobacco production, 1st in fire-cured tobacco production, 1st in dark air-cured tobacco production, and 2nd in total tobacco production nationally.

Tobacco is one of Kentucky's top 5 agriculture export.

In 2014, 91,700 acres of tobacco were harvested producing 214.3 million pounds of tobacco, with an average yield of 2,337 pounds per acre.

In 2014, 10,700 acres of fire-cured tobacco produced 36.4 million pounds, 76,000 acres of burley produced 163.4 million pounds, and 5,000 acres of dark air-cured tobacco produced 14.5 million pounds. **Originally posted on Kentucky Farm Bureau website in April 2016**

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PVH 2310	NC 925
PVH 1452	K 326
PVH 2110	K 346

Burley

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HB3307P LC	KT 212 LC
HB4488P LC	msKY 14XL8 LC
KT 204 LC	NC BH 129 LC
KT 206 LC	TN 90 LC



Dark

KT D6 LC	PD 7305 LC	PD 7312 LC
KT D14 LC	PD 7309 LC	PD 7318 LC
PD 7319 LC	TN D950	NL Madole LC



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NEXT AUCTION
FEBRUARY 15, 2017
8:00 A.M.
MAR 15, 2017 - 8:00 A.M.
APRIL 19, 2017 - 8:00 A.M.

2017	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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JUL	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31					

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Commissioner's Corner

Check the box, and join us in the fight against hunger



Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles

Agriculture Commissioner Ryan F. Quarles

The Kentucky Hunger Initiative got off to a great start in 2016. We convened the Hunger Task Force, a group of leaders from agriculture, government, business, education, charitable organizations, and the faith community, to apply their unique skills and experiences to take on hunger in Kentucky. We held 10 regional meetings throughout the Commonwealth to study the sources of hunger, identify the unique issues that affect different regions of the Commonwealth, and take an inventory of resources that can be utilized to combat hunger in Kentucky.

We are continuing our work in the new year. Committees of the task force are meeting, and the full task force will assemble later this winter. We will join our partners at the Kentucky Association of Food Banks (KAFB) Rally to Solve Hunger on Feb. 7 at the Capitol Rotunda in

Frankfort at 1:00 p.m. I encourage you to join us! Our ultimate goal is to raise awareness of the hunger problem in Kentucky, get the agriculture community more involved, and find ways to reduce hunger that will work in Kentucky's distinct and diverse regions.

There are many ways that you can help. The easiest way is to check the box on your state income tax return – it's on Line 33 on Form 740 – to donate part of your tax refund to the Kentucky Farms to Food Banks Trust Fund. You also may donate directly to the trust fund. Contributions to the fund are used to offset farmers' costs for providing Kentucky-grown fruits and vegetables to food banks. The fund is administered by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

Hunger initiative

Farmers may donate foods to non-profit food programs and receive a state tax credit equal to 10 percent of the value of the donated product. When you donate food, you improve your cash flow while helping feed a Kentucky family. Go to kafb.org/take-action/donate-food to find out more.

About 17 percent of Kentuckians – 1 out of every 6 – is food insecure, meaning they are unsure where their next meal will come from at some point during the year, according to Map the Meal Gap, an annual study by Feeding America. That is one too many, but in a state with such an abundance of food and a rich agricultural heritage, that simply is unacceptable. We can do better. I hope you will join me in donating part of your state income tax return to the Farms to Food Banks Trust Fund, and I look forward to continuing the work of the Kentucky Hunger Initiative in 2017.

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The Championship Tractor Pull also roars into Freedom Hall during the National Farm Machinery Show.



NATIONAL FARM MACHINERY SHOW / FEBRUARY 15-18, 2017
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FAQs About the Farm Machinery Show

Q. What is the admission to the National Farm Machinery Show?

A. There is no cost to attend the National Farm Machinery Show. Parking is \$8 per car.

Q. What are the hours of operation for the National Farm Machinery Show?

A. 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. daily

Q. What are the Championship Tractor Pull times?

A. The Championship Tractor Pull starts at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday with an additional pull at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday. Pulls last approximately 3 ½ hours.

Q. What is the parking fee?

A. Parking is \$8 per vehicle at the Kentucky Exposition Center.

Q. Where do buses park and drop off?

A. Buses can enter gates 2, 3 and/or 4 and drop off in front of Freedom Hall. Parking is available in Lot P.

Q. Is there RV parking? What is the fee?

A. Yes. Overnight RV parking is allowed and is located on the west side of the grounds near Kentucky Kingdom and Gate 2. Parking is \$50 per night with electric hook-up and use of dump station. Sites are first come, first served. Contact the Admissions office at (502) 367-5380.

Q. Is there camping available?

A. Yes, dry primitive camping is \$30 per night with self-contained generator use only.

Q. Is shuttle service provided?

A. The Kentucky Exposition Center does not provide shuttle service; however, cabs and shuttle vans will be available for a fee. They will be located in front of Freedom Hall throughout the show.

Q. What do I do if I have lost something during my visit at the National Farm Machinery Show or Championship Tractor Pull?

A. All items found and turned in to the National Farm Machinery Show staff will be taken to the Kentucky Exposition Center Security Office (entrance beside Ticket Office on the east side of Freedom Hall). Call (502) 367-5360.

Q. Can I bring my pet to the National Farm Machinery Show or Championship Tractor Pull?

A. Pets are allowed to accompany visitors to the NFMS; however, they must be kept on a leash or in a pet carrier. No pets are allowed in Freedom Hall for the CTP.

Q. Can I rent a scooter and/or wheelchair at the National Farm Machinery Show?

A. Scooters and wheelchairs are available from Gould's Medical located in the South Wing B Lobby. Motorized 3-wheel scooters are available for \$53.00/day (carry up to 325 lbs), \$79.50/per day (carry up to 400 lbs) and manual wheelchairs are \$26.50/day. All equipment rentals must be returned 30 minutes prior to show closing. Reservations are available in advance. Attendees will need to provide height, weight, contact information, rental dates, ID and payment at time of reservation. The last day for cancellations is Monday, February 8 at 10:00 a.m. To reserve your mobility aid, please call Gould's Medical at (502) 491-2000 or toll free at (800) 876-6846 ext 4330. Prices subject to change.

Q. How do I find lost children?

A. Lost children are taken to the KEC Security Office, located near the Ticket Office. If the child is not in that room, the KEC Security Office team will work diligently using the phones and radios to locate the child. Once the child and guardian are reunited, the guardian must sign the Child Release Form and show proper identification.

Q. What is the cost for a Farm Show Guide?

A. Farm Show Guides are FREE and are at the main entrance of every building.

Q. What is the cost for a Championship Tractor Pull souvenir program?

A. Championship Tractor Pull souvenir programs are \$5.

Q. Can National Farm Machinery Show jackets be purchased?

A. No, National Farm Machinery Show jackets are not for sale. The jackets are provided for staff members, tractor pull drivers and select sponsors.

Q. Where is the ticket office located?

A. On the east side of Freedom Hall

Kentucky Afield Outdoors:

February a Trophy Fish Month for the Intrepid

FRANKFORT, Ky. – It seems to Kentuckians that someone accidentally dropped the sun down a storm drain about three weeks ago and it hasn't been found yet.

Day after day desolate gray skies discharged rain every few hours. Although it has been warmer than usual, this January has been a long slog.

February is the month tinges of hope arrive back in many anglers' souls.

"Before any change of season, there are hints of the season to come," said Mike Hardin, assistant director of Fisheries for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. "The change from late winter to spring is not abrupt. By the third week of February, you can hear spring peepers calling."

This translates into a time when someone suffering from terminal stage cabin fever can catch a fish for the ages.

Warm February rains muddy the water and provide a temperature spike. "You get that good muddy water in mid- to late-February and you can pull some sows out of it," Hardin said. "Females are gearing up for spawning. They need healthy fat reserves to get them through rigors of spawning. Instinct tells them they must eat."

This situation is a fantastic time to catch a fat, pre-spawn female largemouth bass. Back in the day before graphite rods, bass boats or sonar units, gritty anglers would brave the

weather during the first warm rains of February and employ the "jigging" technique to pull huge largemouth bass from shallow water.

They would use stout cane poles and a large hook tied to heavy black dacron line. These anglers would impale as many nightcrawlers as possible on the hook and using a skulling paddle for stealth, drop this combination beside any stump, log or other shoreline cover they could find.

Modern anglers can do the same thing with a ½-ounce black and blue jig and a flipping stick.

"That muddy water in late February is good flipping water," Hardin said. "My uncle loved it when rains warmed the water to 51 degrees along the shoreline. He would flip a jig to the shoreline cover along those outside bends of Cave Run. That is when he caught his biggest largemouth bass. He had better weights in 51 degree water than in 70 degree water."

Hardin said rains from the south in February also bring large muskellunge to the shoreline.

"That is when I first get my muskies," said Hardin, who caught a 50-inch muskellunge from Cave Run

Lake this past fall. "When you have a 42-to 48-degree main lake with warmer water coming in that is in the mid-50s, this is when you find fish along the shoreline."

Some fish live suckers along the shoreline for big February muskellunge. Those anglers are strongly encouraged to employ a quick strike rig to prevent catch and release mortality. Large rattle baits, such as a muskellunge-sized Rat-L-Trap, also work well for shoreline muskellunge during this time of year.

"I also like a soft plastic bait called the Bull-dawg in February," Hardin said. "I like two-tone colors such as brown and orange. I also like the firetiger with a chartreuse tail version. I also throw jerkbaits like a Suick Thriller when they have their nose on the bank. They see that jerkbait work over their head and they hit it."

A pronounced warm front in mid-to-late February draws big female smallmouth bass from their winter lairs into shallower water to feed heavily in lakes such as Lake Cumberland, Laurel River Lake, Dale Hollow Lake or the lower section of Green River Lake.

If warm rains accompanied the warm front, work white spinnerbaits with chrome Colorado blades right

beside any submerged woody cover. This is an excellent presentation to catch huge smallmouths, especially if the water has some color to it.

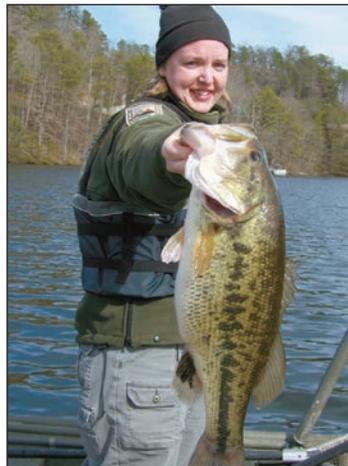
If the warm front simply warms the top layer of water a degree or two without rain, big smallmouth will move up onto a flat to feed. The best flats lie adjacent to the channel on the main lake or major creek arm.

A medium-sized live shiner bottom fished in these areas is one of the best ways to catch the heaviest smallmouth bass of your life. Some anglers crawl the shiner slowly across the flat with just enough split shot weights to keep the shiner down. Others prefer still fishing shiners on the flat using a 1/4- to 3/8-ounce slip-sinker rig with a small black barrel swivel tied on the main line. An 18-inch leader of 8-pound test fluorocarbon line is tied on the other loop of the barrel swivel while the hook goes on the other end of the leader.

A size 1 Octopus-style hook works well for both presentations. You can also fish these rigs right in the middle of small cuts and tiny coves along the main lake or major creek arm for large February smallmouths.

Remember to buy your fishing license soon. February 28 is the last day of the current license year in Kentucky.

Author Lee McClellan is a nationally award-winning associate editor for Kentucky Afield magazine, the official publication of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.



Marcy Anderson, Biologist for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.

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Agritourism destination adds chicken, beef adventures

by JOSEPH S. PETE
The Times

FAIR OAKS, Ind. (AP) — Fair Oaks Farms, the “agritourism destination” that’s already is one of the largest tourist attractions in Northwest Indiana, plans to add major new attractions over the next few years.

The working agritourism destination in Fair Oaks has plans for new chicken and beef cattle adventures that would give visitors a close-up look at modern farming operations, said Fair Oaks Farms Chief Executive Officer Gary Corbett. The multi-million dollar projects would be similar in scale to Fair Oaks Farms’ existing dairy, pig and crop adventures, which help the farm on Interstate 65 pull in more than

600,000 visitors a year.

DeMotte-based Belstra Milling invested \$3 million in the pig adventure that opened in 2013, while Win-Field pumped \$12 million into the Crop Adventure exhibit that debuted last year. Corbett said it was too early to estimate how much would be invested in the new attractions, but that they would be comparable in scale to existing ones.

A new chicken adventure for instance would house 500,000 to 700,000 chickens that visitors could see up close, behind plexiglass walls. The beef cattle adventure would have an estimated 50,000 steers.

Fair Oaks also is building a new hotel, growing a you-pick-them apple orchard and renovating its signature Dairy Adventure, the first

exhibit the sprawling farm straddling the border of Jasper and Newton counties had when it opened its

“You have to continue to add some new excitement on a regular basis,” Corbett said.

“You have to draw in new people, and give people who’ve visited an additional reason to visit.”

doors to the public in 2004.

“It’s one of the largest attractions in the state of Indiana,” said South Shore Convention and Visitors Au-

thority Executive Vice President Katie Holderby.

Well-positioned on a major highway, Fair Oaks draws visitors who might not otherwise visit Northern Indiana, including kids who attend an annual Future Farmers of America convention in Indianapolis, Holderby said. Fair Oaks also has been opening new attractions nearly every year over the last few years, giving people a reason to return.

“It’s important that they’re freshening the attraction,” she said. “It’s doing repeat business because people know they can come see state-of-the-art interactive exhibits.”

Fair Oaks Farms aims to eventually have more than a million visitors a year. The farm plans to break ground

this summer on a new hotel that would cost between \$8 million and \$12 million, and have between 100 and 110 rooms. Corbett said a hotel is needed to serve visitors in the fields of agriculture, business and academia who’ve said they’d like to visit Fair Oaks for more than one day.

The hotel will include a pool and be open to the public. About 45,000 cars pass by daily.

The pick-your-own orchard has been planted behind its the 265-seat Farmhouse Restaurant. The orchard will include a variety of apples, as well as raspberries and blueberries. People should be able to start picking fruit next year; it is expected to be fully open in 2019.

“It’s designed to have apples to cover all season, so it should be open for much of the year,” Corbett said.

Other farms are interested in setting up chicken and beef cattle exhibits at Fair Oaks Farms, to showcase what modern-day farming operations are like. People would be able to walk in Plexiglas alleyways among the chickens in a cage-free facility and see the space they have to run around. In the Beef Adventure, they would learn everything that happens to beef cattle, such as how they’re fed and treated, before steak ends up on the plate.

The hope is to start construction on the chicken adventure this year or next year, but it’s a moving target because of commodity prices and a drop in the egg market, where eggs recently hit a 10-year-low of 55 cents a dozen.

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Fifteen Free Seminars offered at the National Farm Machinery Show

LOUISVILLE - The National Farm Machinery Show (NFMS) offers a full schedule of free seminars for farmers and agribusiness professionals. The seminars are open to all NFMS attendees and are offered Wednesday through Friday, Feb. 15-17 in the South Wing of the Kentucky Exposition Center.

This year's topics include:

- Market and Weather Strategies
- Grow World Record Corn and Soybean Yields
- Updates on the Used Machinery Market
- Marketing Outlook
- New Sprayer Tech and What It Means for My Farm
- Roundup Ready Xtend Crop System Learning Session
- Farm Data at Work on the Farm
- Super Precise Fertilizer Application
- Aerial Imagery

Admission to the National Farm Machinery Show is free and open to the public. Parking at the Exposition Center is \$8 per vehicle and \$20 per bus.

The National Farm Machinery Show (NFMS) is the nation's largest indoor farm show and fea-

tures the agricultural industry's most comprehensive display of equipment, services and technology. Held annually at the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville, it attracts 300,000 attendees from the U.S. and around the world. The country's oldest indoor tractor pull, the Championship Tractor Pull, accompanies the show and provides an added element of entertainment and competition. NFMS contributes \$20.1 million in economic impact to the Commonwealth each year, and is owned and produced by the Kentucky State Fair Board.

Conveniently located adjacent to the Louisville International Airport and near the junction of three major interstates, the Kentucky Exposition Center is easily accessible and just seven minutes south of downtown Louisville. Entrances to the facility are located off Phillips Lane, Crittenden Drive and Preston Highway. Parking is \$8 per vehicle.

UK Department of Veterinary Science launches new websites

The University of Kentucky Department of Veterinary Science has launched three new websites to replace its former single website. The change is designed to enhance informational access and ease of use for visitors.

The new websites include the Department of Veterinary Science, <http://vetsci.ca.uky.edu/>, the Gluck Equine Research Center, <http://gluck.ca.uky.edu/>, and Genetic Testing at Gluck (formerly the Animal Genetics Testing and Research Laboratory), <http://get-gluck.ca.uky.edu/>. The website for the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, <http://vdl.uky.edu/>, remains the same.

The mission of the Department of Veterinary Science, a UK Ag Equine program in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, is to assure the health and viability of animal agriculture through teaching, discovery, research and service.

The mission of the Gluck Center is scientific discovery, education and dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of the health and well-being of horses.

The mission of Genetic Testing at Gluck is to offer the highest quality DNA testing combined with personalized customer service while discovering the genetic basis for traits and diseases in the horse.

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Drone usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early analysis of soils, tillage, tile and drainage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand count and gap analysis • Irrigation management • Observation of growth variability • Assess and observe nitrogen needs • Crop stage monitoring for timing of applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-harvest: dry down and stand consistency observation • Post-harvest: analysis of soils, tillage and topography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of input and machinery performance
Year-round	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-rain: tile drainage system analysis • Post-storm: determine wind/hail/flood damage • Post-event: insurance claim documentation 			



Your Voice Matters...

A Message from American Farm Mortgage & Financial Services



by Alan Hoskins,
President

Thankfully, the most contentious and ill-mannered presidential election in our country's history is now

behind us. There were moments I was unsure if I was witnessing a debate between two candidates for our country's highest office, or two elementary school students engaged in an argument where both needed to be disciplined

for their behavior. Regardless of your candidate of choice, as Americans, we will ALL have a new President to support on Friday, January 20, 2017.

Based upon analysis of the election results, the voice of rural America spoke loudly in last November's contest. I believe this is a great step in ensuring agriculture continues to be on the radar of our elected officials. At this current time, approximately 2% of the nearly 325,000,000 U.S. residents live on a family farm. The number of individuals claiming farming as their primary occupation is even lower with that figure

being only 1%. Further, approximately 97% of current U.S. farms are operated by families consisting of individuals, family partnerships or family corporations.

The figures above illustrate the point that agriculture's voice is primarily dependent on very few people. As such, our involvement in the political process is imperative to ensure our industry is not ignored either legislatively or in the funding of programs important to our success in these challenging times.

Simply stated, those who "live" the issues are more

inclined to provide reasonable solutions to the problem.

While you do not have to seek office to help affect this change, calls to your state and federal representatives, along with senators are great ways to express your ideas for improvement. E-mails to your elected officials are also great ways to voice your thoughts about issues you would like to see addressed. Please keep in mind, issues communicated in conjunction with thoughts for ways they can be improved, are typically received more willingly. Your voice matters and you can make a difference.

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Kentucky delegates help set national agricultural policy

Kentucky Farm Bureau made a strong showing at this year's American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF) 98th annual convention. The organization came away with several awards and honors including the coveted Pinnacle Award as recognition for program and membership achievement.

KFB was also well represented by way of their 2016 annual meeting winners in Discussion Meet, Excellence in Agriculture (EIA) and Outstanding Young Farm Family contests, all vying for national recognition in their respective competitions.

Kirby Green of Daviess County finished in the top 16 of the AFBF Discussion Meet, while Ryan and Miranda Chaplin of Bourbon County, and Brad and Karen Hines of Hart County competed strongly in the EIA and Achievement in Agriculture events, respectively.

Also being recognized was Harlan County Farm Bureau as a County Activities of Excellence (CAE) award

winner. CAE honorees are recognized for innovative program ideas. Harlan County FB initiated County Forestry Days in which young people learned about the forestry industry.

In addition to competitions and award announcements, voting delegates from Kentucky and other Farm Bureaus around the country weighed in on the nation's top agricultural issues and identifying priority topics for 2017 advocacy efforts.

Kentucky Farm Bureau's (KFB) 25 voting delegates represented Bluegrass State farmers as national policy was considered.

According to information from AFBF, resolutions passed by delegates included important measures covering regulatory reform, crop insurance, the inclusion of food assistance in the upcoming farm bill, school nutrition, biotechnology, energy and more.

AFBF President Zippy Duvall said the actions taken by farmer and rancher delegates from across the nation represent the culmination of a

year-long grassroots policy process.

KFB board members approved national priority issues at their December annual meeting including: support of a thorough regulatory review to ensure regulations do not impose an undue economic burden on any segment of society and the regulatory process is transparent and results achievable; supporting fair and open multilateral trade agreements that will open new markets and expand existing markets for U.S. agricultural products; and support of immigration reform that includes restructuring the H-2A program to streamline the process making it more reliable, economical and simple for farmers to participate.

"Setting policy is the number one priority at the AFBF annual convention each year," said KFB President Mark Haney, of Pulaski County, who led the delegation from Kentucky. "Through policy development sessions, we have the opportunity to shape and influence how agriculture will be viewed in Washington, D.C.,

in 2017. It is crucial for Kentucky's farming interests to be well-represented in those discussions, and extremely satisfying to return home knowing we have accomplished that goal."

In addition to the general and business sessions, over 350 KFB members traveled to Phoenix to participate in a variety of industry-based seminars held throughout the event. More than 5,000 Farm Bureau members from across the country attended the AFBF annual convention.

Kentucky Farm Bureau is a voluntary organization of farm families and their allies dedicated to serving as the voice of agriculture by identifying problems, developing solutions and taking actions which will improve net farm income, achieve better economic opportunities and enhance the quality of life for all. For nearly a century, KFB has served as the "Voice of Kentucky Agriculture," representing the interests of agricultural producers and rural communities.

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LIMOUSIN – SAT., March 4th, 10:00 a.m.
HEREFORD – FRI., March 3rd, 1:00 p.m.
RED ANGUS – FRI., March 3rd, 10:00 a.m.
RED POLL – FRI., March 3rd, 4:00 p.m.
SHORTHORN – SAT., March 4th, 10:00 a.m.
SIMMENTAL – FRI., March 3rd, 4:00 p.m.
PEN HEIFER – FRI., March 3rd, 2:00 p.m.

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 SAT., March 4th, 9:30 a.m.
 SAT., March 4th, 4:00 p.m.
 SAT., March 4th, 11:30 a.m.
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Farmer Nominations help schools receive STEM grants

ST. LOUIS, Mo. -- The number of jobs with an emphasis in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) is expected to grow significantly over the next ten years, according to the National Science and Math Initiative. To help K-12 educators enhance their STEM curriculum, the America's Farmers Grow Rural Education program, sponsored by the Monsanto Fund, will once again provide farmers with the opportunity to nominate their local public schools for opportunities to receive \$10,000 and \$25,000 grants.

Former grant-winning schools, such as Early County Elementary School in Blakely, Georgia, indicate the program stimulates school budgets for STEM education, as well as students' level of interest in science and math.

In 2016, Early County Elementary School used the \$10,000 grant they received from the Grow Rural Education program to expand the school's science curriculum by building a hoop house, allowing students to apply classroom lessons about the ecosystem and plant lifecycles to the fruits and vegetables they harvest.

"The Grow Rural Education grant has had an impact throughout our entire school district. After our elementary school students harvest their crops, we provide the food to our high school culinary arts program," said Early County Elementary School teacher Tim Spooner. "This allows high school students to learn their craft and then give a portion of that food to our area's most needy residents."

In 2017, the Grow Rural Education program will award approximately \$2.3 million to deserving schools. Since the program began in 2011, it has awarded more than \$11 million to schools in rural communities across the United States.

To qualify for a Grow Rural Education grant, farmers in eligible counties must nominate an eligible rural public school district to compete for a merit-based grant of either \$10,000 or \$25,000. Farmers can nominate their school district from January 1 to April 1, 2017.

After the school district receives a nomination, the Monsanto Fund will notify the district and encourage administrators and

teachers to design a grant that enhances STEM education in their district.

Nominated school districts have until April 15, 2017, to submit a grant application describing their project. An advisory council composed of farmer leaders then reviews finalist applications and selects the winning school districts.

"The Grow Rural Education program provides farmers with a way to give back and sets students up for success in their local communities," said Al Mitchell, Monsanto Fund president. "We have heard from many school districts that the projects they implement excite their students and, in many instances, have resulted in improved test scores."

To nominate a local school district for one of the Grow Rural Education grants, as well as a complete list of program rules and eligibility information, farmers can go to GrowRuralEducation.com. Additionally, more information about the program can be found at facebook.com/AmericasFarmers.

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Harper starts career as youngest auctioneer in West Virginia

"We specialize in equipment but have a big enough place to do a little bit of everything." ~Tyler Harper

by **Kate Prince** • Farmers' Quarterly Staff Writer
kpikate@gmail.com

Growing up, Tyler Harper helped in his dad's equipment business. At the time, he didn't realize the influence it would have on his future.

Tyler Harper went to auctioneer school in Indianapolis, Indiana when he was only 17-years-

old. To this day, he still holds the record as the youngest auctioneer to be licensed in the state of West Virginia. Even though he attended school for his profession, Harper commented he also learned a lot on his own and from the school of hard knocks.

In January of 2016, at the age of 20, Tyler purchased Harper Equipment and Auction Com-

pany in Scottsville, Kentucky, also known as the 31E Auction Center.

Each year, Harper holds six farm equipment auctions on site. He also hosts other auctions, as well. "We specialize in equipment but have a big enough place to do a little bit of everything," he commented. "Our building is actually made for car auctions."

Just last week, Harper hosted a benefit charity auction. "We try to help the community," he added.

Harper has an equipment retail lot on site that is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information about Harper Equipment and Auctions, call 270-618-7710 or email harperequipment@yahoo.com.



Tyler Harper

Conference to offer 'Change, Challenge and Opportunity'

Registration is open for the 2017 Indiana Farm Bureau Spring Conference, "Change, Challenge and Opportunity," which runs Friday and Saturday, March 10-11, in Indianapolis.

Members who have attended the event in the past will notice a change to the schedule – a later start time. The doors will open for the opening session and meal at 5:30 p.m. on Friday.

"Starting later in the day gave us more flexibility with our programming," said Ashley Beasley, women's leadership program coordinator. "It also accommodates those who have weekday commitments and gives us a full day for business on Saturday."

Two speakers will offer keynote addresses during the conference.

see CONFERENCE page 31



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Indiana students encouraged to participate in video contest

Students in grades 6-12 are encouraged to consider tomorrow's food, feed and fuel supply for a video contest that asks, "What does the future of agriculture mean to you?"

"This contest is a great way for students to think creatively about agriculture, one of the state's most important industries," said Lauren Taylor, Ag Day committee chairman for Indiana's Family of Farmers, the contest sponsor. "We're excited to see how students imagine the future and how it will affect their lives."

The video contest is part of Indiana's celebration of Indiana Ag Day, March 21. From its farms – both big and small – to innovative researchers and agricultural companies, Indiana has continued to lead the way in providing a safe, stable and affordable food supply that feeds a growing population. Through the contest, students are challenged to think about what could be accomplished in the future and how it will affect them. The resulting video must be 30 seconds to 1 minute long.

The entry process and a full list of guidelines can be found at www.indianafamilyoffarmers.com/videocontest.html. All videos that meet the guidelines will be presented on the IFoF website, where the public may vote on their favorite.

The competition is divided into two categories: 6th-8th grades and 9th-12th grades. The entry deadline is Feb. 27, 2017. Entries will be judged on how well the video conveys the theme; the video's ability to gain at-

ention and make a lasting impression; overall quality, including characteristics such as creativity, uniqueness, accuracy, persuasiveness, clarity, and visual and audio production; and popular vote.

A first, second and third prize will be awarded in each category. First place receives a GoPro Hero+ video camera. Second place wins \$150, while third place will receive \$50. All winners will be invited to attend a special recognition ceremony at the Indiana Statehouse on March 21 in celebration of Indiana Ag Day.

Indiana's Family of Farmers was formed in 2009 to raise awareness that Indiana's farmers are among the top producers of grains, produce and meats you eat every day. Groups participating in Indiana's Family of Farmers include the American Dairy Association Indiana, Indiana Beef, Indiana Corn Marketing Council, Indiana Farm Bureau, Indiana Pork, Indiana Soybean Alliance, Indiana Wine Grape Council, Indiana Veterinary Medical Association, Indiana Professional Dairy Producers, Indiana Beekeepers' Association, Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Indiana State Poultry Association, Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service, Indiana 4-H Foundation, Indiana State Board of Animal Health, Purdue Agriculture, USDA Farm Service Agency and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

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Southern Indiana Pork Conference set for Jasper

JASPER, Ind. - Purdue Extension and the trade group Indiana Pork are teaming up to present the fifth annual Southern Indiana Pork Conference on Jan. 30 in Jasper.

The conference runs from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Schnitzelbank Restaurant, 393 Third Ave.

Kenneth Eck, Extension educator in Dubois County, said the conference will focus on key issues in the pork industry, such as livestock regulations, swine production and animal health, including the latest information on the porcine epidemic diarrhea virus.

Topics and speakers are:

* **"Health Concerns - Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea,"** presented by John Baker, a graduate of the Purdue College of Veterinary Medicine and founder of the Warrick Vet Clinic.

* **"Lower Cost, Higher Fiber By-Product Diets,"** presented by Allan Schinckel, Purdue Extension breeding and genetics

specialist.

* **"State Regulatory and Legislative Issues and How They'll Affect You,"** presented by Josh Trenary, executive director of Indiana Pork, and Ben Wicker, director of producer outreach for Indiana Pork.

* **"On-Farm Semen Storage,"** presented by Kara Stewart, Purdue Extension reproductive physiologist.

* **"Understanding Piglet Gut Immune Responses Due to Weaning Stress and Soybean Meals,"** presented by Brian Richert, Purdue Extension swine specialist.

* **"Pork Quality Assurance-Plus Certification,"** presented by Eck. Producers seeking certification need only attend this portion of conference.

For more information visit <http://www.extension.purdue.edu/dubois> or contact the Purdue Extension Dubois County office at 812-482-1782 or duboisces@purdue.edu.

Bardstown Bourbon Co. announces first distilling partnership

BARDSTOWN, Ky. (AP) - Bardstown Bourbon Co. has announced the first partnership in its collaborative distilling program.

The company says Western Spirits Beverage Co. will work with its team to produce whiskey for Western Spirits' brand portfolio at the Bardstown distillery. Bowling Green-based Western Spirits produces Bird Dog Whiskey, Lexington Bourbon and Calumet Farm Kentucky Bourbon Whiskey.

Bardstown Bourbon recently broke ground on a distillery expansion to double its capacity to 3 million proof gallons.

The company in the heart of Kentucky's bourbon country also says it plans to open its visitors and events center to the public by this summer. The visitors' experience will include tours, tastings, event space and a large whiskey collection.

The company started commercial production last September. It produces whiskey, bourbon and rye for its own brands and collaborative partners.



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USDA Announces \$18.9 Million Available to Support Agricultural Education at 1890s Land-grant Institutions

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) today announced \$18.9 million in funding for eligible 1890 land-grant colleges and universities to obtain or improve agricultural and food sciences facilities and equipment. The 1890 Facilities Grant Program helps the eligible institutions educate the future workforce in the food, agricultural and human sciences job sectors.

"This funding signals our ongoing commitment to create future leaders and skilled professionals in the field of agricultural innovation," said NIFA Director Sonny Ramaswamy. "By building adequate facilities we help 1890 Land-Grant Universities and Institutions sustain their programs in agriculture, food and human sciences."

The 1890 land-grant institutions were established under the Second Morrill Act of 1890 to foster higher education opportunities for African-Americans and other underrepresented student populations. This funding opportunity aligns with NIFA's strategic goal to develop human capital, communities and a diverse workforce through research, education, extension and engagement programs in food and agricultural sciences to support a sustainable agriculture system.

Eligible applicants include Alabama A&M University, Tuskegee University, University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff, Delaware State University, Florida A&M University, Fort Valley State University, Kentucky State University, Southern University, University of Maryland-Eastern Shore, Lincoln University, Alcorn State University, North Carolina A&T State University, Central

State University, Langston University, South Carolina State University, Tennessee State University, Prairie View A&M University, Virginia State University, and West Virginia State University.

The application deadline is March 21, 2017.

See the request for applications on the NIFA 1890s Facilities Grants Program web page for more information.

Previously funded projects include an outreach and teaching facility for livestock at Tuskegee University. The university's Cooperative Extension division provides services to beef producers in the Black Belt region, a southern region that has a high percentage of African-American farmers and ranchers, and the surrounding counties. The project also provides outdoor laboratory facilities for veterinary faculty and students. Florida A&M University completed renovations to the Quincy Teleconference Center to better serve the needs of limited-resource audiences in the community by offering programs that address educational, economic and health issues.

Since 2009, NIFA has invested in and advanced innovative and transformative initiatives to solve societal challenges and ensure the long-term viability of agriculture. NIFA's integrated research, education and extension programs support the best and brightest scientists and extension personnel whose work results in user-inspired, groundbreaking discoveries that combat childhood obesity, improve and sustain rural economic growth, address water availability issues, increase food production, find new sources of energy, mitigate climate variability and ensure food safety.

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KDA approves more than 12,800 acres for hemp planting in 2017

FRANKFORT, Ky. — The Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) has approved 209 applications from growers who have been approved to cultivate up to 12,800 acres of industrial hemp for research purposes in 2017, nearly triple the number of acres that were approved for the previous year. More than 525,000 square feet of greenhouse space were approved for indoor growers in 2017.

“By nearly tripling hemp acreage in 2017 and attracting more processors to the state, we are significantly growing opportunities for Kentucky farmers,” Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles said. “Our strategy is to use KDA’s research pilot program to encourage the industrial hemp industry to expand and prosper in Kentucky. Although it is not clear when Congress might act to remove industrial hemp from the list of controlled

substances, my strategic objective is to position the Commonwealth’s growers and processors to ultimately prevail as national leaders in industrial hemp production.”

The KDA received a total of 252 applications – 234 grower applications and 18 processor/handler applications. Applicants were asked to identify which harvestable component of the plant would be the focus of their research (floral material, grain, or fiber); some applicants selected more than one component.

In addition to grower applications, KDA approved 11 new applications from processors (in addition to 29 previously approved multi-year processor applications that were not required to reapply). Five universities will also carry out additional research projects in 2017. KDA officials cited the recent decline in commodity prices as one factor that appears to be generating increased

interest among Kentucky’s farmers in industrial hemp and other alternative crops.

In 2016, 137 growers were approved to plant up to 4,500 acres. Program participants planted more than 2,350 acres of hemp in 2016, up from 922 acres in 2015 and 33 acres in 2014.

To strengthen KDA’s partnership with state and local law enforcement officers, KDA will provide GPS coordinates of approved industrial hemp planting sites to law enforcement agencies before any hemp is planted. GPS coordinates were required to be submitted on the application. Participants also must pass background checks and consent to allow program staff and law enforcement officers to inspect any premises where hemp or hemp products are being grown, handled, stored, or processed.

“We have made collaboration and

communication with the law enforcement community a top priority for KDA’s management of this research pilot program,” Commissioner Quarles said.

Staff with the KDA’s industrial hemp research pilot program evaluated the applications and considered whether returning applicants had complied with instructions from KDA, Kentucky State Police, and local law enforcement. To promote transparency and ensure a fair playing field, KDA relied on objective criteria, outlined in the 2017 Policy Guide, to evaluate applications.

The KDA operates its program under the authority of a provision of the 2014 federal farm bill, 7 U.S.C. § 5940, that permits industrial hemp pilot programs in states where hemp production is permitted by state law. For more information and to view the 2017 Policy Guide, please visit kyagr.com/hemp.

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Challenges facing tobacco farmers

Fewer than 4,500 tobacco growers are left in Kentucky, a state where the crop has always been number one. However growing health concerns about tobacco use, as well as the increasing number of foreign growers, have hurt the industry in Kentucky.

In 2004, Congress passed the Fair and Equitable Tobacco Reform Act, which included the Tobacco Transition Payment Program, commonly known as the "Tobacco Buyout." The buyout provided cash payouts to tobacco growers as compensation for the loss of quotas.

Economist with the University of Kentucky say the industry saw major consolidation after the buyout. Twenty-five years ago, most farms were raising an average of three to five acres of tobacco.

Today, most tobacco farmers have

more than 30 acres, and most are raising cattle or other crops alongside their tobacco.

According to the Agriculture Census there were 29,237 tobacco farms in Kentucky in 2002. By 2007, just after the buyout, the number dropped to 8,113, and by 2012, the number dropped to 4,537 farms.

Estimates say that with this year's Agriculture Census there could be as few as 3,000 tobacco farms left.

Demand has gone down due to increasing health concerns and restrictions on consumption as well as excess supply in the world market and the high value of the dollar.

While price is still the single most critical factor, today's buying segment is looking more at "value," which includes both price and quality of leaf. Tobacco companies are now being challenged on many

fronts given the health risks associated with their products along with the general public's perception of the industry.

The tobacco marketplace challenge is to deliver reduced-risk tobacco products to a declining consumer base amid increased regu-

lations.

To survive the new tobacco market environment, growers must be willing to adapt to a changing market and produce high quality leaf with reduced health risks. Source: Kentucky Today and UK Agriculture websites.



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Soybean could be called “the staple of life”

by Pat Thomann
kpieditor@gmail.com

With the many uses of the soybean it could easily be called the staple of life. Developments in uses have increased over the years and you can find soybean in almost anything and the uses for soybeans are still developing. While the majority of soybeans are processed for their oil, there are many other uses.

For every 60 pound bushel of processed soybean you will get a yield of about 47 pounds of soybean meal and 11 pounds of soybean oil. Soybean protein meal makes up 38% of the bean and yields about 18% oil. The meal is fed to livestock and the oil is used in cooking and other uses.

A small portion of the soybeans is used in the making of soy flour, soy protein, soymilk, tofu, salad dressings and mayonnaise. Foods that contain soybean oil include crack-



These Western Kentucky soybean fields were ripe and ready for harvesting last fall.

Photo by Pat Thomann

ers, cookies, cakes and pies and the oil is also used in canned tuna and sardines.

There are quite a few soy uses that we don't think about including the making of crayons, soy-based lubricants that can withstand a higher heat than petroleum lubricants, soy based hydraulic fluid, solvents,

paints and cleaners.

Soy protein is a safe way of feeding cattle, swine, poultry and other farm animals there are used for human consumption but it is also a good source of food for aquarium fish and fish grown for eating.

Soy products are also found in carpet, candles, auto upholstery, fur-

niture, ink products and even soy-based foam is now being used in building insulation, refrigerators, coolers, footwear and automotive interiors.

Soybean yield varies from year-to-year and from state to state. 2015 US soybean average yield estimate was at 47.5 bushels per acre. Many factors go into estimating soybean yield such as drought, pest, weather damage and other issues.

With the need for alternative fuel sources it's no wonder that soybeans are being used in the production of biodiesel products and ethanol. Since biodiesel products produce less emissions of HC, NOx, CO with less smoke it is no wonder soybeans are being used.

As scientists continue to experiment with soybean uses and develop more soybean products the US is one country that will reap the benefits of a product that seems to have a never-ending list of uses.

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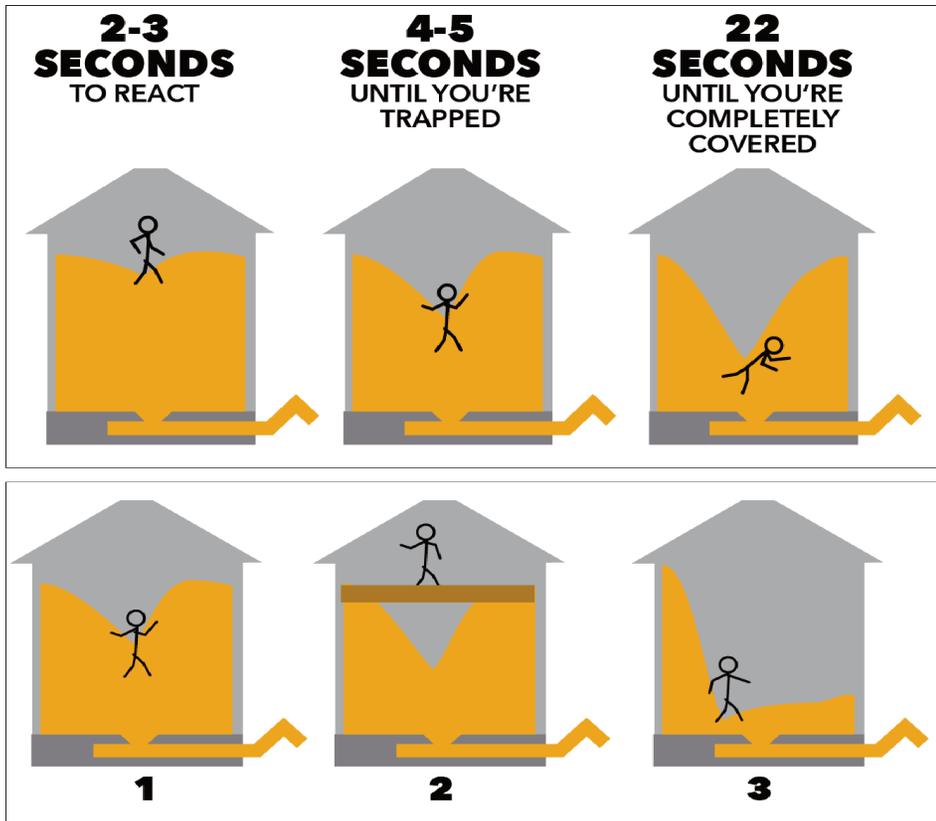
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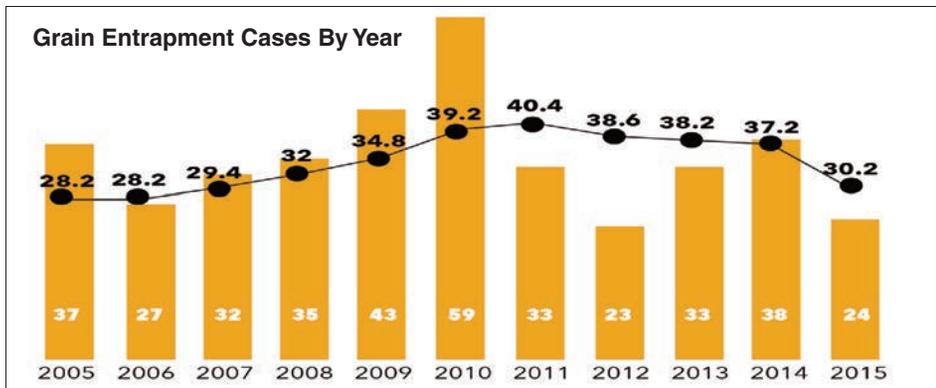


Grain Entrapment: A person is partially submerged but cannot remove themselves

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Department revokes Licenses of Keller Grain Company, Inc.

The Illinois Department of Agriculture has revoked the grain dealer and warehouse licenses belonging to Keller Grain Company, Inc. The company has two locations in southern Illinois, in Jonesboro and Anna. The licenses were revoked following an administrative hearing to address the suspension of the facility's licenses for failure to pay a producer, on demand, for grain purchased from that producer. The company has been ordered to cease and desist doing further business.

The Illinois Department of Agriculture has assumed control of the company, including its grain assets, and will begin the process of compensating claimants per the Illinois Grain Code. Anyone who has sold grain to the company and has not been paid in full or has grain stored in the company's 547,000 bushel facilities should contact the Department's Bureau of Warehouses to file a claim.

The deadline to file claims is March 29, 2017, or seven days from the date notice was mailed to a particular claimant, whichever is later.

Keller Grain Company was a member of the Illinois Grain Insurance Fund, which means valid claimants at the facility are protected under the Illinois Grain Code. Provisions for compensation under the Illinois Grain Code are as follows:

Grain that was delivered and priced within 21 days before the date of failure is covered at 100 percent;

Grain that was priced 22-160 days of the date of failure is covered at 85 percent;

Grain sold on a price later contract is protected at 85 percent of closeout value within 365 days of delivery.

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USDA invests \$13.6 Million in Citrus Greening Research

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) today announced four grants totaling more than \$13.6 million to combat a scourge on the nation's citrus industry, citrus greening disease, aka Huanglongbing. The funding is made possible through NIFA's Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI) Citrus Disease Research and Extension Program, authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill.

"The economic impact of citrus greening disease is measured in the billions," said NIFA Director Sonny Ramaswamy. "NIFA investments in research are critical measures to help the citrus industry survive and thrive, and to encourage growers to replant with confidence."

Huanglongbing (HLB) is currently the most devastating citrus disease worldwide. HLB was first detected in Florida in 2005 and has since affected all of Florida's citrus-producing areas leading to a 75 percent decline in Florida's \$9 billion citrus industry. Fifteen U.S. States or territories are under full or partial quarantine due to the presence of the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), a vector for HLB.

Since 2009, USDA has invested more than \$400 million to address citrus greening, including more than \$57 million through the Citrus Disease Research and Extension Program since 2014. Awards for grant applications submitted in FY 2016 include:

- Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina, **\$4,274,523**
- Regents of the University of California, Riverside, California, **\$5,112,000**
- Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, **\$2,476,099**
- USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Athens, Georgia, **\$1,821,197**

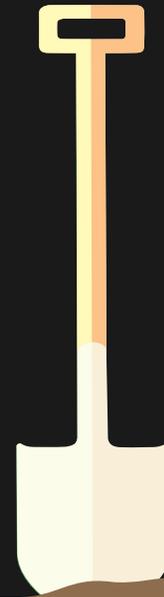
Funded projects include Clemson University researchers using naturally HLB-resistant citrus trees to develop new resistant varieties using the CRISPR-Cas9 genome edit-

ing tool. The Regents of the University of California project will design and identify HLB bactericides based on both natural and nanotechnology approaches. Researchers at Iowa State University will investigate the use of sustainable, naturally occurring soil bacteria to control ACP. The ARS project will identify and assess the effectiveness and economic viability of chemotherapy treatment options.

Among past projects, the University of Florida developed bactericides to help recover fruit production in HLB-affected orchards. Research at the University of California used virulence proteins to develop strategies for creating citrus rootstocks that are immune to HLB.

NIFA is a member of the federal Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) group to help deliver near-term tools to citrus growers to combat HLB. In addition, NIFA support to the National Plant Diagnostic Network This is an external link or third-party site outside of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) website, helps plant diagnostic laboratories share best practices and expedite diagnoses and screening for ACP and HLB. The network coordinates diagnostician training in HLB with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's Plant Protection and Quarantine. These services enable rapid and accurate diagnoses and support U.S. food security.

Since 2009, NIFA has invested in and advanced innovative and transformative initiatives to solve societal challenges and ensure the long-term viability of agriculture. NIFA's integrated research, education and extension programs support the best and brightest scientists and extension personnel whose work results in user-inspired, groundbreaking discoveries that combat childhood obesity, improve and sustain rural economic growth, address water availability issues, increase food production, find new sources of energy, mitigate climate variability and ensure food safety.



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New DGD Power Sweep offered by GSI

by **Kate Prince**
KPI Staff Writer
kpikate@gmail.com

Beginning last month, GSI began offering a new version of the Direct Gear Drive Power Sweep. The re-design is considered to be simpler and eliminates pieces of the equipment that were known for quickly wearing down.

Equipment operators will now have the opportunity to manage the intermediate and center wells separately. If the center well is clogged, they will be able to open the

first intermediate well. Also, the design offers permanent grain bin installation with a rubber wiper attached to the back of the back shield. This will make it easier to get grain from the bottom of the bins.

Some other updates on the equipment include a heavier duty gear box and improved steel roller bearings. The DGD Power Sweep is offered in two sizes; an 8-inch auger will work in 15- to 48-foot bins and the 10-inch will work for 24- to 78-foot bins.

To learn more about GSI products, visit www.grainsystems.com or contact Perry Farm Supply, in Palmersville, TN, at 731-822-4415.



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South Missouri Bull Sale * March 25, 2017 * Joplin Regional Stockyards, Carthage, MO * 200 bulls!

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CONFERENCE
continued from PAGE 20

Vance Crowe, director of millennial engagement for Monsanto, will deliver his message on Friday evening. Crowe is a former communications strategist for the World Bank Group, a returned U.S. Peace Corps volunteer and was a deckhand on an eco-tourism ship, among other adventures.

Comedian and speaker Leslie Townsend is Saturday's keynote. Townsend uses humor to share her experiences as someone who married into farm life after growing up in the city.

Friday features "nightly networking" time, where attendees choose from a wine and canvas session (advance registration required; session is \$35 per person); hearing from sports humorist and motivational speaker Howard Kellman; listening to singer Randy Lyness, who also serves as a state representative; or a game table.

Two auctions will take place: a silent auction, which runs from 8:30-10:30 p.m. Friday and 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, and a live auction on Friday night.

Proceeds from both will go to the Bucket Buddies Mission, an organization that helps children fighting cancer or other life-threatening diseases.

Five rounds of breakout sessions will be featured in three tracks – a change track, a challenge track and an opportunity track – on Saturday. Members in need of private applicator recertification program credit will have an opportunity on Saturday afternoon during the "challenge" track. The cost is \$10 at the door for PARP credit.

Registration is open until Feb. 27. Visit www.infb.org/springconf for more information and to register. Spring Conference takes place at the Indianapolis Marriott East, 7202 E. 21st St., Indianapolis.

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Upgrades in Ag. Technology

by Dakota Stigall
KPI Staff-writer

2017 seems to be a promising year for the farming community. In the world of all things agriculture, many new technologies that were once only concepts are now being created and implemented in various avenues across the nation. Through various categories, technology takes hold of the business by serving a new purpose with each job. Technology is used just like any machine; to make the job easier.

Although most of the older generations scoff at the word technology, and quickly reply with a, "Back in my day," it seems now that these same generations are reaping the benefits from agricultural technology. This new technology allows us to do things that weren't quite possible before, such as seeing nutrient levels without ever having to drive across the field. Not only does technology make a job easier to do, but it completely revolutionizes what we are able to do.

Technology allows a job to be done faster, with less work on our part. New technologies that are being unveiled in various farm shows this year include: sensor upgrades, automation, drone use, enhanced satellite calibration, improved UAV and data collection, as well as cab up-



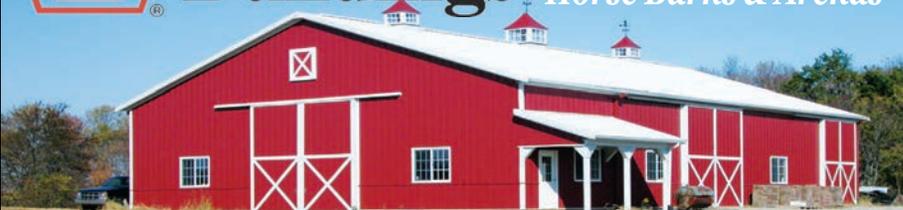
grades for most tractors.

Although some of the tractors seen in fields today have a space-ship feel, because of all the 'bells and whistles,' each one serves a very unique purpose, which contributes to the

overall capabilities of the tractor. Data collection is another important upgrade on the list. Instead of going out to every field to collect soil samples, which have to be dried, put in a bag, and then tested; why not fly a UAV or drone over each field with the sensors and monitors available to tell you each nutrient level.

With the use of UAV's or a drone, data collection becomes a breeze for the modern day farmer. In less time than it usually takes, with not even half the effort, a farmer can know exactly how much fertilizer a certain area of the field needs. Sensor upgrades are making the planting cycle for crops much more accurate, as well.

The biggest issue with technology is our collective fear of it. We have to see that with the aid of technology there are so many possibilities and amazing potential outcomes. In this case, the good outweighs the bad. Technology is the best way for the agricultural world to, "Work smarter, not harder."

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Statement from KFB President Mark Haney on International Trade

Agriculture exports are critical to growing ag-related and rural economies. A substantial amount of Kentucky's agricultural sales comes from exports, and while the majority of our farms in the Commonwealth are smaller, family-owned operations, each one has a role to play in providing these goods that are in demand around the world. Those operations also depend heavily on the income created by export markets. The saying about the world being smaller is true when it comes to international trade.

During our last annual meeting, the KFB board approved national priorities including the support of fair and open multilateral trade agreements that will open new markets and expand existing markets for U.S. agricultural products.

Already we have seen much movement on the part of the new administration in Washington related to international trade. As these discussions begin, it's important to reiterate our position on these trade agreements that benefit the American farmer.

We find ourselves living in an environment where the world depends on international trade and agriculture must play a significant role in any negotiations of current or future agreements.

We encourage our lawmakers and decision makers at all levels of government to make every effort possible to keep our ag export markets vibrant and growing for the benefit of our producers across this state and the nation.

American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall said in a recent statement, the organization pledges to work with the administration to help ensure that U.S. agriculture can compete on a level playing field in markets around the world. But we need the administration's commitment to ensuring we do not lose the ground gained.

I agree and want to emphasize that while these markets are crucial to the success of our industry all the time, we are currently in the midst of declining net farm incomes. Now, more than ever, any unrealized or lost revenues can be devastating to our farms and our rural way of life.

We are always striving to create new markets both here and abroad for Kentucky products and look forward to new trade deals and fortified existing agreements. We offer our support in making that happen. But, as advocates, we must be diligent in our efforts to have our voices heard in all matters related to the sustainability of our American agriculture industry.



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ISDA awarded \$376,500 to support agriculture

The Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) awarded \$376,500 to six agricultural organizations for projects that will support specialty crop production in the state. These grants were established through the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program and designed to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops, paving the way for further growth in the field.

"Specialty crop production is an important part of Indiana's diverse agricultural industry," said Ted McKinney, ISDA Director. "As a critical source of revenue for many Hoosier farmers, we must continue to find new, innovative ways to increase profitability and sustainability of specialty crop production while making advancements in food safety. These projects will help us achieve those goals."

According to USDA, specialty crops include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops, and floriculture. Along with enhancing the markets for specialty crops, these projects also work to address some of the chief issues impacting the industry, such as increasing nutritional knowledge and consumption of specialty crops, developing new and improved seed varieties, and investing in specialty crop research, to name a few.

The following list includes the organizations and programs that received funding through the Specialty Crop Block Grant program:

- Organization: Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service
Program: Cantaloupe Safe Practices Education

Award amount: \$104,500
 Purdue University will determine best practices for Indiana cantaloupe production with a focus on food safety.

- Organization: Purdue Extension, Hancock County
Program: FoodLink 2.0

Award amount: \$58,000

FoodLink 2.0 aims to provide a greater diversity of food choices while educating consumers about Indiana's specialty crops.

- Organization: South Central Community Action Program, Inc.
Program: Growing Opportunities
Award amount: \$58,000

The project aims to expand the impact of the Growing Opportunities greenhouse job training program to more people in Monroe County through building on the relationships it has started with its partner organizations. The project is also aimed at promoting healthy families and children through expanded consumption of specialty crops by people in poverty, along with reducing hunger.

- Organization: Schooner Hill Start A Hive
Program: Schooner Hill Start A Hive

Award amount: \$35,000

Schooner Hill Bee Hive Farm will partner with Brown County 4-H Extension to promote the competitiveness of specialty crops through apiculture education, training and use implementation for residential and small farm applications.

- Organization: Purdue Extension, Marion County
Program: Urban Farm Incubator
Award amount: \$57,900

Urban Farm Incubator aims to increase opportunities for new and beginning farmers, develop local and regional food systems, support the growth of organic specialty crops and improve food access in underserved communities.

- Organization: Indiana State Department of Agriculture
Program: Indiana Grown Initiative

Award amount: \$63,100

Indiana Grown will work to educate Hoosier consumers about the importance of buying specialty crops grown in Indiana, while supporting growers statewide.

USDA announces \$8.8 Million available to support Agriculture Programs at Hispanic serving Institutions

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture announced availability of \$8.8 million in funding to support agricultural science education at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). The Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) Education Grants Program promotes and strengthens HSI programs that attract, retain and graduate outstanding students capable of enhancing the nation's food, agricultural, natural resource and human sciences work force.

"Hispanic students earn only eight percent of the degrees awarded in science, technology, engineering, and math," said NIFA Director Sonny Ramaswamy. "These investments help Hispanic-Serving Institutions promote STEM education and agricultural industry ca-

reers to all their students, including Hispanic students."

While research and extension activities may be included in a funded HSI Education project, the primary focus must be to improve teaching, enrollment and graduation rates within a degree-granting program. One five-year project with Texas State University helped boost its completion rate to 92 percent. A NIFA grant to New Mexico Highlands University designed to increase the number of Hispanic students earning a Bachelor of Science degree has helped more than 1,100 students since 2009.

Eligible applicants are certified HSIs, which are public colleges and universities that have an enrollment that includes at least 25 percent Hispanic students. Currently, more than 400 HSIs are located in

"Hispanic students earn only eight percent of the degrees awarded in science, technology, engineering, and math,"

degrees and careers as leaders in agriculture through training and internships at USDA agencies.

For more details, see the HSI request for applications on the NIFA website.

NIFA invests in and advances innovative and transformative research, education and extension to solve societal challenges and ensure the long-term viability of agriculture. NIFA support for the best and brightest scientists and extension personnel have resulted in user-inspired, groundbreaking discoveries that are combating childhood obesity, improving and sustaining rural economic growth, addressing water availability issues, increasing food production, finding new sources of energy, mitigating climate variability and ensuring food safety.

21 states and Puerto Rico, serving more than 2 million students.

Past projects have included a Texas State University project that encourages female and Hispanic military Veterans to earn bachelor's degrees in agriculture and other science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) degree programs. A project at Texas A&M University-Kingsville encourages students from underrepresented groups to pursue STEM

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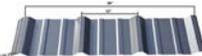
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New Indiana Facility's Breakthrough Technology Transforms Dairy Manure into Precision-Ag Fertilizer

FAIR OAKS, IN, Feb 1, 2017 – Midwestern BioAg today unveiled a new manufacturing process that transforms manure into a uniform, dry fertilizer granule that can be efficiently stored, transported and spread. Referred to as TerraNu Nutrient Technology™, the process infuses essential crop nutrients into a manure base to give more farms access to the biological benefits of manure. Products made through this process offer precision application:

Each granule has the same guaranteed analysis, allowing for even in-field distribution.

The new manufacturing facility is located at Indiana-based Fair Oaks Farms, a collection of 12 dairies with herds totaling 36,000 milking cows. Midwestern BioAg committed to the Fair Oaks location largely because of the Farms' prior investments to maximize nutrient-use efficiency and reduce environmental impacts.

Production is expected to begin in March. Sales efforts are expected to focus on farms and retailers within 100 miles of the new plant.

"This is how it should work," said Mike McCloskey, co-founder of Fair Oaks Farms. "We don't want anything go to waste. Our manure powers parts of the farm, runs a fleet of trucks and feeds many of our own crops. Now, it can provide essential nutrients for other farms. Midwestern BioAg is building on

our earlier work."

The fertilizers will deliver a full suite of agricultural nutrients, including micronutrients. The base material is made primarily of decomposed microbes from the digested manure. This biological material is food for living soil microbes when the product is used as

fertilizer; it draws nutrients into the soil-life food chain, helping make them more plant available.

"This helps close the nutrient gap in farming," said Midwestern BioAg CEO Anthony "Tony" Michaels, Ph.D. "A typical American farm once had both crops and livestock.

Today, with necessary specialization, there is a disconnect. The crops are in one place, the cows in another, and many farms miss out on the benefits of manure. We can fix that."

TerraNu Nutrient Technology has potential to help address nutrient-loading and water quality challenges faced by some large dairies. Because it is cumbersome and expensive to transport, cow manure rarely travels more than 10 miles from dairies; the TerraNu process facilitates transfer of excess nutrients to distant farms, reducing impacts on local water supplies.

Midwestern BioAg, based in Madison, WI, manufactures and distributes fertilizers that build soil health to increase yields and quality of both food and forage. For more information about TerraNu fertilizers, see: www.MidwesternBioAg.com/TerraNu.

We don't want anything go to waste. Our manure powers parts of the farm, runs a fleet of trucks and feeds many of our own crops. Now, it can provide essential nutrients for other farms. Midwestern BioAg is building on our earlier work."

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Farm to table: A bit tricky in winter, but in high demand

by Lisa Rathke
Associated Press

Demand driven by the farm-to-table movement knows no seasons, so farmers in colder areas of the country increasingly use greenhouses and similar structures to meet winter-time demand for local produce.

While crusty snow and ice covers the ground in January in Vermont, spinach leaves sprout in rows of unfrozen soil inside a high tunnel — a large enclosure covered by plastic film that is warmed by the sun and protected from the wind.

"I can never keep up with the spinach demand," said Joe Buley, owner of Screamin' Ridge Farm in Montpelier, who planted the spinach in November and will sell it in about two weeks.

This time of year, when vegetables are trucked in from California and Mexico, some consumers clamor for fresh local produce.

"I'm definitely interested in supporting local agriculture, and I defi-

nately like eating greens in the winter," said Serena Matt of Marshfield, Vermont, who paid Bear Roots Farm in South Barre, Vermont, ahead to get biweekly bundles of produce that in the winter typically include greens like spinach or baby kale.

The federal government helped spur the growth in winter farming by providing financial and technical assistance to farmers to install high tunnels to extend the growing season, protect crops from harsh conditions, reduce energy use and improve air quality by reducing the transportation of food. Between 2010 and 2016, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service helped producers construct more than 15,000 high tunnels around the country, with Alaska having the most.

Rohwer's Farm in Pleasant View, Colorado, got its first 30-by-72-foot high tunnel that way.

"And it did so well we were able to get a second one, and we added a third one last year," said Heidi Ro-

hwer, estimating they cost about \$7,000 each.

The small farm makes regular trips to Durango, Colorado, in the winter to sell kale, lettuce, carrots, arugula, and bok choy.

Buley expects his spinach to start taking off soon, when the sun gets higher in February.

It's a lot sweeter, with thicker leaves, than summer spinach, because of the colder weather, he said.

"Root vegetables are nice, but usually right around Jan. 1, people are like, if you come at them with a butternut squash, they're going to smack you," he said laughing.



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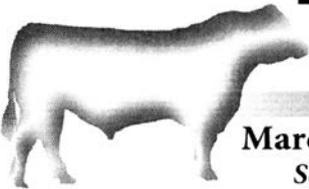


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Ky. Dept. of Revenue taking extra measures to protect safety of taxpayer information

Kentucky Press News Service

To help guard against the growing threat of tax fraud and identity theft, the Kentucky Department of Revenue has taken additional steps that enhance the safety and security of processing taxpayers' individual income tax returns, including an Identity Confirmation Quiz.

Beginning Friday, some taxpayers

will receive letters from the department asking the taxpayer to take a short online Identity Confirmation Quiz before their tax refund is fully processed. The letter will give specifics as to what the taxpayer must do to take the quiz, according to a state news release.

The identity confirmation quiz will be available for 30 days from the date of the letter at

revenue.ky.gov/quiz. Once a taxpayer successfully completes the quiz, the department will continue processing their return. If the taxpayer fails the quiz twice or does not take the quiz, the department will require additional documentation such as the hard copies of W2s or 1099s.

The taxpayer should not ignore this letter, the news release said. The

sooner the quiz is taken and passed, the quicker the Kentucky Department of Revenue can continue processing the return.

The Identity Confirmation Quiz can be taken online anytime at revenue.ky.gov/quiz or by telephone at (502) 892-3399, during regular work hours (Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET) with an authorized representative to help with the process.

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- 1999 IH 4700 Dump Truck, Silage/ Grain Bed, 280,000 Miles, DT 466 Engine
- 1986 Ford 600 Dump Truck Silage/ Grain Bed 370 Motor
- 2000 Dodge 2500, 4WD, Diesel, 6 Speed, 244,000 Miles



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AUCTIONEER'S NOTE: After many years of dairy farming the Whites have decided to retire. The dairy cows were sold in 2015 and now the equipment sells. The dairy equipment is in excellent shape. The farm equipment is very well maintained. If there is any know problems with anything we will pass it along

Contact Tony White 931-619-7626

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Hope Garden incorporates hydroponics

by Dakota Stigall
Indiana Newspaper Feature Writer

Thanks to a very generous donation from Superior-Ag, the year old Hope Garden at the Jasper Memorial Hospital has a new addition. There were ten hydroponic towers donated to the garden, as well as various other equipment to sustain a year round growing operation. Various plants will be planted in the towers, but the goal is to grow fresh vegetables year round rather than just part of the year.

Growing plants with hydroponics is still a fairly new process, but is proven to have amazing results if done properly. Hydroponics put simply is the art of growing plants without soil, instead using only water and a regimen of nutrients and minerals specific to each plant. Hydroponics works so well because the main thing a plant needs to thrive is water. Replacing dirt with water is a revolutionary idea that maintains a perfectly balanced growing medium, as well as a continuous and stable PH.

What this means for the Jasper area is that 'food-insecure' families will have access to healthy and organic produce. With the additional towers, a large variety of fruits and vegetables will now be added to the ever expanding list of produce grown by the Memorial Hospital. Last year alone, on only two acres, 3,000 pounds a fresh organic food was grown. That is enough food to feed well over 1,500 people.

By implementing gardener tricks and trends to the hope garden, there will be even more produce this year than last. The Memorial Hospital is doing great things for its community, and is continuously bringing people together for the betterment of the local atmosphere.

Anyone interested in volunteering to grow this amazing program is asked to call 812-996-8428 for information regarding both the outdoor and indoor gardens.

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Post-Season Dryer Maintenance

Make sure you disconnect all power and turn off the gas supply before proceeding with any post-season maintenance!

Just because you are done harvesting and drying your crop does not necessarily mean the job is finished. Before the cold winter weather sets in is the preferable time to perform that post-season cleanup around your grain drying system. Pay special attention to your grain dryer. Open all accessible doors such as outside metering roll access doors, two-foot bottom auger cleanout doors and inside plenum access doors. Completely clean out all remaining material either with pressurized air or a high pressure sprayer to eliminate foreign material from degrading

augers, auger troughs and metering rolls of your dryer. After sufficiently cleaning these areas, leave these access doors open during the non-drying season.

TIP: Do not forget to close these access doors before next year's use!

Inspect power and control panel boxes for accumulation of bees wings and insect infestation. Utilize your vacuum system provided with Farm Fans PGC pneumatic cleaner or carry the old "shop vac" out to the dryer

site and vacuum these areas. While you are cleaning, be aware of any possible areas that may allow rain, snow or even birds to get into these boxes and make any necessary repairs.

Inspect burner ignition wires, flame detection wires, and control and power panel wiring for deterioration and replace if necessary. Also, take time to inspect all wiring connections that might have loosened during the drying season and tighten.

Visually inspect bearings to see if there is any indication of one

needing replaced and make a note to replace ones that are suspicious. Do the same with any drive belts and chains and lubricate those chains for the winter.

Walk around your grain dryer system with your "Things To Do" notepad and make reminders of what needs to be looked at by your grain handling equipment dealer and get an appointment with him early for needed repairs or replacements.

Remember, post-season maintenance helps prevent pre-season replacement. An ounce of prevention can save you tons of problems next year!

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Quarles praises U.S. ag secretary pick

Sonny Perdue served as governor of Georgia from 2003-2011

FRANKFORT, Ky. — Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles praised the selection of former Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue as United States secretary of agriculture.

"I want to congratulate Gov. Perdue on his selection as the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture," Commissioner Quarles said. "Gov. Perdue brings a lifetime of agriculture and management experience to this post. I know I join many of Kentucky's agricultural leaders in praising President-elect Trump for selecting such an accomplished man in Gov. Perdue. I look forward to working with Gov. Perdue and his staff to continue the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's strong relationship with the USDA in order to advance the prosperity of farmers and all of rural America."

Perdue, 70, is a businessman, veterinarian, and former Georgia state senator who served as governor of Georgia from 2003-2011.

Improved Restricted Class B CDL policy provides greater flexibility for agricultural retailers

The Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) and Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) are pleased to announce new seasonal options available for the Restricted Class B Commercial Driver's License (CDL), which will provide greater flexibility for producers and agricultural retailers. The new policy will take effect on Feb. 1, 2017.

"During the planting and harvest seasons, those in agriculture have enough to worry about without making it tougher for them to get the proper CDL," said BMV Commissioner Kent Abernathy. "This new policy gives them more flexibility."

Prior to this policy change, those in agricultural transport could only haul seasonal loads during predesignated periods of time. During planting season in particular, this put some producers and agricultural retailers at a disadvantage who, regardless of climate or their specific operations, were unable to haul loads before April 2.

Under this new policy, drivers will be able to custom tailor their Restricted Class B CDL license to their own needs and will no

longer be restricted to predesignated periods of time.

"Many unknown variables affect planting and harvest seasons, and producers and agribusinesses know best what works for them," said Ted McKinney, ISDA Director. "By providing greater flexibility, this is a major victory for Indiana's agricultural community. I commend BMV on their work and for being such a great partner on this issue."

The Restricted Class B CDL still has to be renewed every four years, and the seasonal periods can be changed at time of renewal. Such a license allows operation of Class B and Class C vehicles only. Holders may not carry hazardous material loads that require a placard except for;

- Diesel fuel in quantities of 1,000 gallons or less
- Liquid fertilizers in vehicles or implements of animal husbandry with total capacities of 3,000 gallons or less
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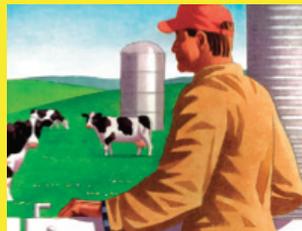
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The impact of weeds on agriculture

by Teresa Pearson

Weeds can reduce farm and forest productivity, they invade crops, smother pastures and in some cases can harm livestock. They aggressively compete for water, nutrients and sunlight, resulting in reduced crop yield and poor crop quality. For example, prickly weeds such as Prickly Sida, Common Cocklebur and Thistle can invade vast areas of grazing land preventing productive use of that land.

Weeds can contaminate farm produce, for example:

- Burrs in wool contaminate fleeces
- Larkspur contains various alkaloid compounds especially toxic to cattle
- Animals that eat specific weeds, such as wild garlic, produce tainted milk and meat
- Spines on fruit of weeds can damage the feet of stock animals
- Chokecherry leaves will kill a sheep in 30 minutes.
- Hemlock can be lethal to both stock and people.
- Weeds can also affect the operation of farm machinery.

Farmers typically spend a large amount of time and money managing weeds. Despite control efforts, a recent survey of issues facing the agriculture industry found that weeds were the most commonly reported natural resource management issue affecting landowners. Weed-related issues affected 73% of agricultural establishments. This compares to 46% of farmers reporting soil and land issues and 38% reporting water issues.

The impact of weeds on human health

Weeds can also cause human health problems. Many common weeds such as Parthenium Weed, Ragweed, Rye Grass and Privet cause asthma and other respiratory problems, especially in children. Some weeds can also cause skin irritation and some are poisonous.

Some water weeds such as Water Hyacinth and Water Hemlock can affect the quality of our drinking water if infestations are not managed within water supply dams.

There are no common characteristics of a poison or harmful weed that would help distinguish them. But as a general rule, plants with a bitter taste, unusual smell, milky sap or red berries may be poisonous with some plants having poisonous roots and bulbs.

Source: USDA and Ky. Dept. of Agriculture



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Charlie Rowlett, Sale Chairman - 731-514-6348

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Agritourism destination adds chicken, beef adventures

by Joseph S. Pete
 The Times

FAIR OAKS, Ind. (AP) — Fair Oaks Farms, the "agricultural Disney" that's already is one of the largest tourist attractions in Northwest Indiana, plans to add major new attractions over the next few years.

The working agritourism destination in Fair Oaks has plans for new chicken and beef cattle adventures that would give visitors a close-up look at modern farming operations, said Fair Oaks Farms Chief Executive Officer Gary Corbett. The multi-million dollar projects would be similar in scale to Fair Oaks Farms' existing dairy, pig and crop adventures, which help the farm on Interstate 65 pull in more than 600,000 visitors a year.

DeMotte-based Belstra Milling invested \$3 million in the pig adventure that opened in 2013, while WinField pumped \$12 million into the Crop Adventure exhibit that debuted last year. Corbett said it was too early to estimate how much would be invested in the new attractions, but that they would be comparable in scale to existing ones.

A new chicken adventure for instance would house 500,000 to 700,000 chickens that visitors could see up close, behind plexiglass walls. The beef cattle adventure would have an estimated 50,000 steers.

Fair Oaks also is building a new hotel, growing a you-pick-them apple orchard and renovating its signature Dairy Adventure, the first exhibit the sprawling farm straddling the border of Jasper and Newton counties had when it opened its doors to the public in 2004.

Well-positioned on a major highway, Fair Oaks draws visitors who might not otherwise visit Northern Indiana, including kids who attend an annual Future Farmers of America convention in Indianapolis.

Fair Oaks Farms aims to eventually have more than a million visitors a year. The farm plans to break ground this summer on a new hotel that would cost between \$8 million and \$12 million, and have between 100 and 110 rooms.

Retail food prices in Kentucky decrease slightly during 4th Quarter of 2016

Fourth quarter results of the latest Kentucky Farm Bureau Marketbasket Survey indicated a slight decrease in surveyed food prices and marked declines in three of the four quarters of 2016. With the exception of last year's second quarter, price declines indicated by the survey have been realized over the last two years.

These prices, which represent the average total cost of 40 basic grocery items included in the survey, declined by .87 percent or \$1.02. The total cost of the 40 items was \$117.49. During this same period last year, the total price for these same items stood at \$119.43.

The largest decline, percentage wise, came by way of the grains category which dropped by 5.52 percent; followed by fruits and vegetables, which declined by 4.89 percent; poultry, which dropped by 3.02 percent; and dairy, which saw prices fall by 2.14 percent.

Beef products increased slightly by .45 percent while pork prices increased by 6.41 percent, the largest percentage change in all of the food categories.

The fall in prices mirrors what is happening nationally to food prices, although most of the declines are relatively small.

According to the latest information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Consumer Price Index noted, "The food at home index declined 2.2 percent over the past year, (unchanged from last month's figures) with all six of the major grocery

store food group indexes falling. The index for meats, poultry, fish, and eggs posted the largest decline over the span, decreasing 6.0 percent."

Marketbasket Survey specifics:

The price on a five pound package of corn meal declined by \$.27; a 20 oz. loaf of white bread fell by \$.15; a 10 pound bag of potatoes decreased by \$.78; a dozen large eggs dropped by \$.21; and a one pound unit of butter dropped by \$.41.

A two-pound package of rolled sausage increased by \$1.13; one pound of pork spare ribs increased by \$.37; and rib eye steak increased by \$.98 per one pound unit.

Agricultural Economics in Food Prices:

Whether or not U.S. grocery prices fluctuate from one quarterly survey to the next, Kentuckians and all Americans continue to enjoy some of the lowest food prices in the world. Shoppers in the U.S. spend only about 10 percent of their disposable income on food each year. Those costs remain far lower than any other country in the world thanks to many of the agricultural efficiencies utilized in America. Today the average U.S. farmer produces enough food and fiber to provide for about 155 people – a significant jump from an average of 19 people per farmer back in 1940.

According to the USDA's Food Dollar Series, a farmer earns less than 16 cents per dollar spent on food, down significantly from the 31 cents earned in 1980.

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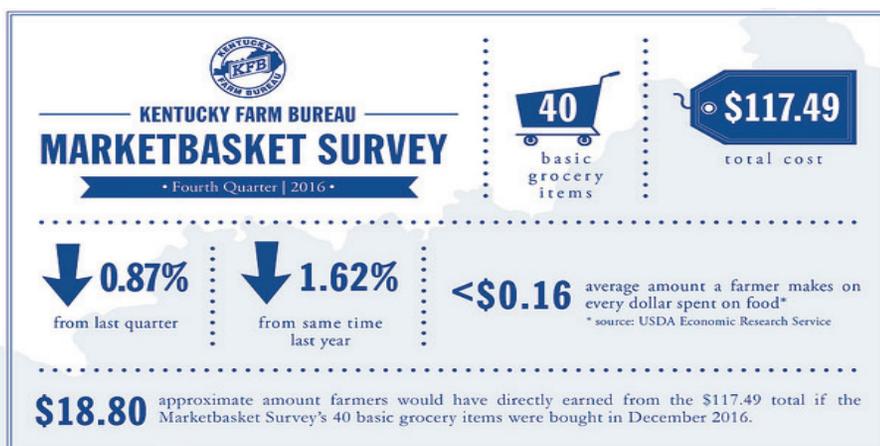


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Kentucky Horse Park organizes 100th Anniversary Celebration for Man o' War

LEXINGTON - The life and legacy of one of America's original sporting heroes, the legendary Man o' War, will be the highlight of a year-long celebration at the Kentucky Horse Park beginning on March 29, his birthday.

"Man o' War is a true American icon, born in Kentucky before going on to capture the country's imagination by winning 20 of 21 races, smashing records and setting the bar that all other Thoroughbreds are measured by," said Kentucky Horse Park Executive Director Laura Prewitt. "We are excited to announce not only an amazing exhibit, but also numerous events that will be held here at his final resting place, the Kentucky Horse Park, and throughout central Kentucky."

Entitled Man o' War: The Mostest Horse That Ever Was, the exhibit will open on March 29, coincidentally Man o' War's birthday, at the Kentucky Horse Park and will contain never before seen artifacts of his illustrious career as a racehorse, a sire, and from his life in the Bluegrass as one of the state's most well-known and visited residents. "We took the name of the exhibit from Will Harbut, the man who took care of him most of his life here in Kentucky," said International Museum

of the Horse Director, Bill Cooke. "There are so many pieces of history with the Man o' War exhibit that racing fans will be thrilled to see."

The entire list of Man o' War events will be announced on March 29, but Prewitt previewed some of what can be expected. "There will be a number of events beginning with his birthday, a legacy mural of Man o' War that will be painted in downtown Lexington, special Man o' War-themed horse farm tours will be offered and much more that will involve fans of all ages."

Thriving in the golden age of American sport, Man o' War dominated sports headlines, often overshadowing legends such as Babe Ruth, Jack Dempsey and Bobby Jones. His dominance of the sport was followed by a successful career at stud in Kentucky, siring Triple Crown winners and numerous other champions. His power as a sire can be traced down today to the most recent Triple Crown winner, the great American Pharoah.

"The story of Man o' War is truly a remarkable one," said Prewitt. "Our goal is to celebrate his life and equally encourage visitors to experience all that the Kentucky Horse Park has to offer."

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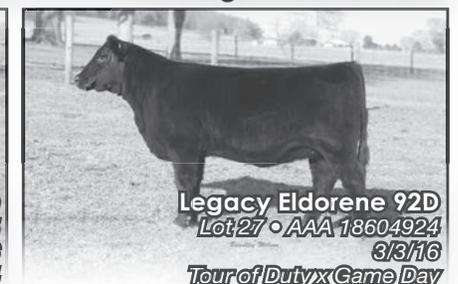


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Kentucky beekeeping schools set for 2017

FRANKFORT, Ky. — Events aimed at educating beekeepers of all experience levels are scheduled through May 2017.

“Beekeeping has a proud heritage in Kentucky, but it also has a promising future for honey production and pollination,” Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles said. “Whether you are a veteran beekeeper or just getting started, I hope you will take advantage of these opportunities to

find out more about this fascinating and growing industry.”

Schedule is as follows:

Discovery Trek: Introduction to Beekeeping, Feb. 25, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. EST, Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, Harrodsburg

Northeastern Bee School, Feb. 25, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. EST, registration opens at 7:30 a.m., Maysville Community and Technical College

Small Farm and Garden Confer-

ence, Feb. 25, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. EST, Franks Building, Ashland

Northern Kentucky Beekeepers Association Beginner Bee School, Feb. 25, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. EST, Boone County Enrichment Center, Burlington

Audubon Beekeepers Bee School, March 4, Henderson County Cooperative Extension Expo Center, Henderson

Bluegrass Beekeepers School, March 11, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., EST, registration opens at 8 a.m., Kentucky State University, Frankfort

Kentucky State Beekeepers Association Spring Meet, March 18, Franks Building, Ashland

Queen Production Workshop, April 7-8, Pulaski County Cooperative Extension Service Office, Somerset

Field workshop, April 12-15, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. CDT, Kent Williams Apiary, Wingo

Kentucky State University Queen Production Workshop, May 19-20, Jenny Wiley State Park, Prestonsburg.

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USDA announces stricter animal welfare rules for eggs, meat

by Mary Clare Jalonick
Associated Press

Organic meat and egg producers will have to abide by stricter animal welfare standards under a new rule announced Wednesday by the Agriculture Department.

The rule is a victory for animal rights groups two days before President Barack Obama leaves office. The regulations will ensure that organically grown livestock have enough space to lie down, turn around, stand up and fully stretch their limbs. Poultry will have enough room to move freely and spread their wings. Beaks can't be removed and cattle tails can't be cut. Living conditions will have to include fresh air, proper ventilation and direct sunlight.

The regulations were first proposed last year. Elanor Starmer, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, says the rules are designed to help organic producers meet consumer expectations and ensure the integrity of the USDA organic seal as the industry has grown rapidly.

"It ensures that everyone competes on a level field and plays by the same rules," Starmer said.

Farm-state lawmakers and some farm groups remain opposed to the rules, which they said could raise food prices and force some farmers out of business. Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., chairman of the Agriculture Committee, said he'd work with Donald Trump's administration after he is inaugurated Friday to try and reverse them. Trump has yet to name an agriculture secretary.

"With less than 48 hours left in power, this administration has overstepped its bounds with this damaging rule," Roberts said.

The rules won't go into effect until 2018, and some of the changes aren't required for several years. That could give the next administration time to make changes.

The retail market for organic food products is valued at almost \$40 billion in the United States. USDA said last year that the number of certified organic operations in the United States increased by almost 12 percent between 2014 and 2015, the highest growth rate since 2008 and an increase of nearly 300 percent since the department began counting operations in 2002.

continued on page 53

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Pork industry says not to worry about a bacon shortage

by David Pitt
Associated Press

An insatiable demand for bacon depleted frozen pork belly supplies in the U.S. to a record low level for December, but the pork industry is confident it can keep up with demand and avoid any serious shortages.

Bottom line: A pound of bacon may cost a little more as winter wears on, but prices should stabilize by summer.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture reported last week that pork bellies in cold storage fell to 17.7 million pounds last month, the lowest December inventory since records began in 1957. In comparison, more than 52.3 million pounds of pork bellies — the cut of the hog from which bacon is derived — remained in storage in December 2015.

"Veterans of the industry say

clearly this is record-breaking stuff," said Russell Barton, a market reporter for protein analyst firm Urner Barry. "December is the lowest on record. They really haven't ever seen a situation like this before."

Pork bellies are usually stockpiled in freezers at the end of the year and the first few months of the next year to get through the summer peak months when bacon consumption is highest, Barton said. This season, bacon demand was high enough that fresh pork bellies were used as quickly as they were produced, leaving significantly less meat to store.

Prices at the wholesale level already are showing an increase. Tuesday's pork belly prices were at \$1.71 a pound, about 37 percent higher than this time last year, Barton said. Retail bacon prices haven't jumped significantly but could

"Veterans of the industry say clearly this is record-breaking stuff,"
~ Russell Barton

climb as the industry works to catch up.

"What this says is there was excellent product movement in the fourth quarter of 2016," said Steve Meyer, a pork industry economist for Express Markets Inc., which tracks industry trends for retailers and foodservice companies.

Meyer isn't concerned about the short-term stockpile shortage because he expects pork production to increase about 3 percent this year.

The popularity of bacon has increased as the pork industry has figured out new ways to sell the product. To keep pace with in-

creased pork demand, the industry is building at least four new processing plants in Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri and Michigan in the next few years.

The variety of bacon treats has soared in recent years to include delicacies such as jalapeno bacon, bacon apple pie, doughnuts with bacon and chocolate chocolate-covered slices, said Brooks Reynolds, an Iowa commercial insurance agent who created the Blue Ribbon Bacon Festival, which attracts more than 10,000 bacon enthusiasts to Des Moines on Feb. 18.

"People will pay what it costs to buy bacon because they love it," he said.

Demand also has increased as bacon has become an ingredient in menu options at restaurants including Subway and Bruegger's Bagels, and as McDonald's started selling breakfast all day.

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Old Fashioned

Kentucky Bourbon is the king of whiskey, and the Old Fashioned is the king of bourbon cocktails.

Old Fashioned can be made this way:

- 2 oz Any aged spirit*
- .5 oz Simple Syrup**
- 2 dashes Bitters
- Orange or Lemon

Chill a mixing glass and an Old Fashioned glass.

Fill the mixing glass with ice.

Add simple syrup, bitters, and Kentucky bourbon to the mixing glass.

Stir.

Add one very large, fresh ice cube or several smaller fresh cubes to the chilled Old Fashioned glass. Strain the cocktail into the glass, over the fresh ice.

Garnish with a twist of citrus—lemon or orange, depending on your preference.



Hot Toddy

Cure for anything that ails you.

Hot Toddy can be made this way:

- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 cup hot water
- 6 tablespoons Kentucky Bourbon
- 2 lemon wedges
- 2 cinnamon sticks

Stir honey and water in a cup until honey dissolves. Add bourbon. Divide between 2 Toddy glasses. Twist lemon in each drink, then add to glass. Stir each with a cinnamon stick and serve.

Mint Julip

The signature cocktail of Churchill Downs since 1938, it's estimated that more than 120,000 juleps are served over the course of the weekend.

Mint Julip can be made this way:

- Add sugar and water (or simple syrup) to a glass or julep cup.
- Add mint and lightly muddle, being sure to swab the sides of the glass with mint.

Fill glass half full with crushed ice. Add Kentucky Bourbon and stir. Add more crushed ice and stir again, until the glass frosts up.

Garnish with a bouquet of fresh mint.



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Alltech Lexington Brewing & Distilling Co. introduces imperial porter made with Kentucky's state fruit

Kentucky Bourbon Barrel Blackberry Porter is first of several new releases planned for 2017

LEXINGTON, Ky. – Over the past two months, a new brew has been quietly aging in the barrel room at Alltech Lexington Brewing & Distilling Co. Utilizing the official state fruit of Kentucky, Kentucky Bourbon Barrel Blackberry Porter is the newest addition to the Barrel-Aged Seasonal Series. The imperial porter makes use of two Kentucky products: blackberries and bourbon barrels.

Designated the official fruit of Kentucky in 2004, blackberries are a

local treasure that can be found in the wild throughout the state. Combine them with a few of the 5.6 million bourbon barrels currently resting in Kentucky and you get a brew that has earned its name.

According to Alltech Lexington Brewing & Distilling Co., Kentucky Bourbon Barrel Blackberry Porter comes with “bold roasted malt flavors, complemented by a nose of fresh blackberries.” The barrel-aged seasonal clocks in at 8.3 percent alcohol by volume and is a perfect warmer for the last few cold days in spring.

The new offering is the first of

2017 in an ever-expanding lineup for Lexington's oldest brewery. After introducing the Kentucky Rickhouse Series in late 2016, this blackberry porter will be followed by more projects to excite the craft beer community.

“Innovation is key in the craft beer industry,” said Marty Lamb, general manager at Alltech Lexington Brewing & Distilling Co. “Most of the fun comes from seeing what the brewers create and where they get their inspiration.”

Kentucky Bourbon Barrel Blackberry Porter will be available in stores the week of Feb. 6 in Ken-

tucky and the following week in outside states.

Follow the Kentucky Ale Facebook page or @KentuckyAle on Twitter for updates as well as special events and other product releases.

For more information about Alltech Lexington Brewing & Distilling Co., visit www.kentuckyale.com.



Kentucky Bourbon Barrel Blackberry Porter is available in stores beginning Feb. 6 in Kentucky and the following week in outside states.

Quarles praises U.S. Ag Secretary pick

Sonny Perdue served as governor of Georgia from 2003-2011

FRANKFORT, Ky. — Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles praised the selection of former Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue as United States secretary of agriculture.

“I want to congratulate Gov. Perdue on his selection as the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture,” Commissioner Quarles said. “Gov. Perdue brings a lifetime of agriculture and management experience to this post. I know I join many of Kentucky's agricultural leaders in praising President-elect Trump for selecting such an accomplished man in Gov. Perdue. I look forward to working with Gov. Perdue and his staff to continue the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's strong relationship with the USDA in order to advance the prosperity of farmers and all of rural America.”

Perdue, 70, is a businessman, veterinarian, and former Georgia state senator who served as governor of Georgia from 2003-2011.

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• USDA announces stricter animal welfare rules

continued from 49

The broadest changes proposed by USDA would cover indoor and outdoor access for poultry, including minimum space requirements. Producers will have to provide birds with daily access to the outdoors and those areas will have to include vegetation or soil. Enclosed porches cannot be considered outdoors.

The Agriculture Department removed language from the proposed rule that would have required producers to provide "suitable enrichment" to entice birds to go outside. That proposed requirement was mocked by Republican lawmakers who opposed the regulations — Roberts once joked about yoga and video games for chickens — and drew concern from food safety advocates who said more outdoor access may increase the chances of salmonella contamination.

USDA said that requirement was

removed because it conflicted with Food and Drug Administration rules to prevent salmonella illnesses.

The National Pork Producers Council said the regulations could add complexity to the organic certification process, "creating significant barriers to existing and new organic producers."

Animal welfare groups cheered the move. Wayne Pacelle of The Humane Society of the United States said the lack of well-defined requirements has led to inconsistency in how organic welfare standards were applied.

"The rule is a game-changer for the \$40 billion organic market whose consumers often believe that organic farm animals are raised with strong animal welfare standards," Pacelle said.

The Organic Trade Association said the vast majority of organic egg producers already follow the standards.

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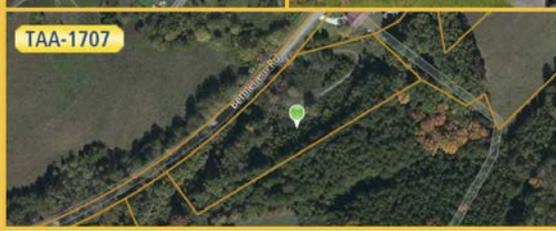
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Seminar to provide information on Kentucky's hemp industry

LEXINGTON, Ky. - New and experienced industrial hemp producers and interested individuals can get a broad overview of hemp production and the Kentucky hemp industry at one of three regional meetings.

A meeting will be Feb. 9 in Shelby County and will begin at 10 a.m. local time and end at 4 p.m. at the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service office. This is a collaboration between the Kentucky Hemp Industries Association, Kentucky Hemp Research Foundation, UK Cooperative Extension Service and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

"The meeting will give producers and processors good information about the hemp industry in Kentucky and will get them ready to grow and process hemp this year," said Tom Keene, UK agronomy specialist.

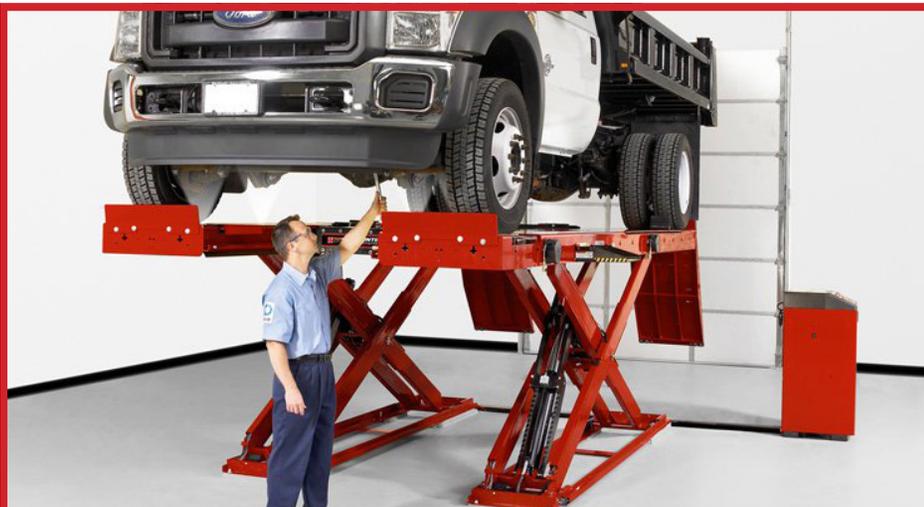
"Our strategic objective is to position the commonwealth's growers and processors to ultimately prevail

as national leaders in industrial hemp production," Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles said. "These regional meetings will help us achieve that objective. We appreciate the opportunity to work with our partners to inform the participants in the Industrial Hemp Research Pilot Program."

The KDA Industrial Hemp Research Pilot Program has tripled its acreage for the upcoming growing season, bringing the total to 12,800 acres.

Topics on the agenda include hemp marketing, hemp agronomics, the KDA's Industrial Hemp Research Pilot Program and KDA policies. Presenters include Keene; Doris Hamilton, program manager of KDA's Industrial Hemp Research Pilot Program, and representatives from Kentucky's hemp industries.

More information is available by online at hemp.ca.uky.edu/ or by calling (502) 633-4593 for Shelby County.



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Getting to know your new hunting rifle

FRANKFORT, Ky. – Lots of hunters receive a new rifle over the holidays or take advantage of the subsequent sales to add to their collection.

The impulse is to immediately dash off to the shooting range. Fighting back that urge and instead taking time to familiarize yourself with your new rifle is a good first step toward safe and responsible ownership.

Because the mechanics and features of rifles can vary by model and manufacturer, it's best to approach this getting-to-know-you phase without any preconceived notions. The safety mechanisms on three popular hunting rifles illustrate the sometimes small, but not insignificant, differences between models.

"The Remington 700 has a two-position safety lever on the side of the action. The Model 70 has a three-position lever that is attached to the rear of the bolt. The Ruger bolt guns have a tang safety that is behind the bolt and on the top of the pistol grip," said Bill Balda, hunter education supervisor with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. "These are all good places to put safeties, but this is an example of how manufacturers produce little differences in their rifles."

The owner's manual is a logical starting point. It will detail the main parts of the rifle and offer step-by-step instructions for safely operating and maintaining the rifle. If the booklet is missing, contact the manufacturer or check the company's website for a downloadable copy.

Balda suggests tightening the action screws, sling studs, scope mount and scope rings and giving a newly acquired rifle a thorough first cleaning.

"When you clean it, you should strip it down to basic components," he said. "I would use the manual when disassembling it for the first time. I would not take the bolt apart unless I absolutely had to. You should not take the firearm out of the stock unless it's fallen into a big puddle or been in a heavy downpour and you need to get moisture out of it. Ninety-nine times out of 100 you

do not need to take the rifle out of the stock."

At home, practice handling your unloaded gun. A firm grip with your shooting hand will help better control the rifle and makes the trigger pull feel lighter, Balda said. Work the action, focusing on a fluid motion. Dummy rounds can be excellent training aids. Most common modern centerfire rifles can be dry-fired without harming the rifle but check the manual. Pulling the trigger should be a smooth, straight-back motion.

These movements become second nature through repetition.

"This is a very safe and economical way to learn the basics of shooting a good shot, which are sight alignment, trigger control and follow through," Balda said.

For scoped rifles, boresighting is an excellent way to get "on paper" and expedite the sighting-in process at the range. This can be accomplished with the aid of a laser boresighter. Another method for a bolt action rifle with a scope starts with securing the unloaded rifle in a gun vise and removing the bolt. Place a dot on the wall or pick out an object like a light switch. Look through the receiver end toward the muzzle and move the gun until you can see your aiming point through the barrel. Then, look through the scope and adjust until the aiming point is aligned in the crosshairs.

"This is not a zero," Balda said. "But it helps you get closer to a zero with less ammo."

When you're confident with your knowledge base and are ready to visit the shooting range, consider investing in ammunition from a few different manufacturers that match your rifle's caliber. Don't be shy about asking the sales associate or a mentor for recommendations.

If you plan to utilize a tube range maintained by Kentucky Fish and Wildlife, bring along eye and hearing protection, targets and either tape or a staple gun to affix targets to the backdrops down range. Invite an experienced shooter to join you. Their feedback can be invaluable.

Balda recommends starting the sighting-in process at 25 yards and focusing on technique. Shoot groups of three to determine the type of ammunition that your rifle shoots best. This is the time to zero-in your scope.

"When you're shooting, and you should use a rest, what's really important is that you hold the rifle the same way," Balda said. "A lot of people like to just lay the rifle across the top of a sandbag and let it recoil freely. Any change of pressure in your shooting hand will change the recoil pattern."

"The rifle starts to move before the bullet clears the muzzle. So if you're not holding it down the same way, there's no guarantee that it will be in the same place for each shot. This frustrates a lot of people. They have this big group and they say, 'This rifle doesn't shoot.' Maybe it doesn't but it probably does. It's just a technique problem."

Be a deliberate and safe shooter and follow all the guidelines for the range. Should any mechanical problems crop up with your new rifle, call it a day and contact a gunsmith or the manufacturer.

"Most of the problems with accuracy that people encounter when sighting-in a rifle are due to technique," Balda said. "It's not that the barrel doesn't shoot or the ammo is bad or the sights weren't tight. It's usually technique. You need to hold the rifle securely each and every time. Put your head on the same place on the stock in order to get the right sight alignment and pull that trigger smooth and straight to the rear."

Spending time getting to know your new rifle builds familiarity and trust. But it's only part of becoming a safe, responsible hunter.

Hunter education courses are offered online and in-person throughout the state.

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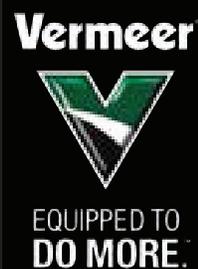
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KDA proposes legislation to help feed the hungry

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) has come forward with legislation to help businesses and individuals who wish to donate food to organizations that serve hungry Kentuckians.

“These measures would provide incentives and protections for those who want to join the fight against hunger in Kentucky,” Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles said. “This is due to the work of the Hunger Task Force, which met for the first time last spring. This is just the beginning of our efforts to reduce food insecurity in the Commonwealth.”

One proposal would double the tax credit for food products donated to food banks to 20 percent. The current tax credit is 10 percent and is scheduled to expire at the end of this year. Quarles also called for the tax credit to be made permanent. Few Kentucky farmers know about the tax credit, and even fewer use it. The

state Department of Revenue reported that only one taxpayer was approved to claim the credit in its first two years. Quarles said this measure would provide a stronger financial incentive for farmers to donate surplus foods.

A second proposal would strengthen the shield against legal liability for food donations beyond that of the federal Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, making Kentucky's food donor immunity shield one of the strongest in the nation. The measure would provide a stronger immunity shield for individuals and businesses, and their employees, who donate to food banks; for food banks and their employees; and for landowners who allow gleaners to come onto their land to pick vegetables and fruits for the hungry.

For more information about the Hunger Initiative and the Hunger Task Force, go to kyagr.com/hunger.

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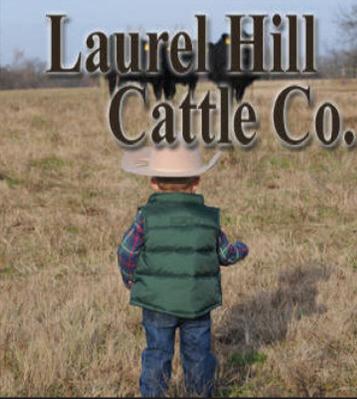
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Calf sets new record, sells for \$251,000

by **Kate Prince**
KPI Staff Writer
kpikate@gmail.com

During last month's International Dairy Week, a two-month-old calf sold for \$251,000. This price set the new record for the price paid for either a beef or dairy cow.

According to a statement given by Auctioneer Brian Leslie, the calf was labeled "the number one animal in the world" thanks to its genetic bloodline. DNA showed it as the number four heifer in the world on the US index system.

The Holstein was auctioned off at the World Wide Sires Evolution Sale in Australia and was purchased by Sexing Technologies, an American genetics company.

The Texas-based company is known for having elite dairy animals such as Holsteins, Jerseys and Brown Swiss. They will be the first to export an Australian dairy animal to the United States.

Sexing Technologies and similar companies became interested in the animal after seeing its outstanding genetic value over a month ago. The company's plans are to put the calf into their female herd and reproductive work will enable viable embryos to make more calves.

The calf's original owners, Declan Patten and Callum Moscript of Lightning Ridge Genetics were obviously thrilled with the results.

The calf, called Lightning Ridge-CMD Jedi Gig, was made from embryos imported from North America and did exactly what it's owners set out to do -- prove to Australian farmers that there is money in genetics.

Patten told news sources that Genomics has turned the industry into a global industry and said his profits would be going back into investing in more genetics.

The previous record for a beef or dairy cow sale was \$112,000 and was set at an Australian auction organized by Patten back in 2015.





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Alcoholic Beverage Control: We're responding to industry growth

by Kentucky Press News Service

FRANKFORT - Kentucky's alcohol landscape is changing, and the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control said it's working daily to ensure that it matches industry growth with exceptional and efficient customer service.

ABC is responding to changing industry and licensing demands by streamlining procedures and improving internal operations to better assist applicants and licensees, an ABC news release said.

Senate Bill 11, which was signed into law last year, gives greater autonomy to local territories to hold "wet"/"dry" elections and develop alcohol ordinances. The department works with localities across the state to ensure the process is understood and that economic opportunities are maximized, the agency said.

"Our agency leadership has worked hard to streamline processes and reduce needless redundancies,"

Christine Trout, Commissioner of the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, said in the news release. "We re-routed our phone tree to more efficiently handle inquiries and updated the department's website to improve the user experience. All of these changes allow our staff to operate with a customer-service mindset so that we can better serve Kentuckians."

ABC has experienced an increase in call volume since SB 11 took effect, fielding approximately 85-105 phone calls each day. In addition, the department reviews and renews licenses for up to 1,400 sites each month.

The work volume has not deterred department leadership from giving careful consideration to every application and inquiry received. Once a new locality officially becomes "wet," ABC assigns a licensing specialist from the department to assist with incoming applications. The local government has the authority to write and approve ordinances, determine

local ABC administrators, and impose license fees as authorized by law.

ABC also assists new license applicants and encourages each candidate to simultaneously file the required paperwork with both local and state officials to expedite the licensing process. The department is in the process of implementing an online system for initial license applications, which will be available in April. If a quota license is requested, applicants must also submit an economic impact statement for review by the Distilled Spirits Administrator. The administrator reviews each statement and makes informed licensing decisions on an individual basis, considering factors such as location, law enforcement, transportation, public sentiment, and the overall economic impact on the region.



GSI hosted their bi-annual Dealer Rewards Trip in January, 2017 at Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. The highlight of the three-day meeting was the Ochre Awards banquet which celebrated achievements of the GSI dealer network. Perry Farm Supply was awarded 2015 and 2016 State honors as Tennessee's highest-selling dealership. Based upon sales of the entire GSI network, Perry Farm Supply also earned 2015 and 2016 Silver awards. Owner Jason Workman and William Ofenheusel accepted the awards on behalf of Perry Farm Supply.

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USDA Announces \$18.9 Million Available to Support Agricultural Education at 1890s Land-grant Institutions

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) today announced \$18.9 million in funding for eligible 1890 land-grant colleges and universities to obtain or improve agricultural and food sciences facilities and equipment. The 1890 Facilities Grant Program helps the eligible institutions educate the future workforce in the food, agricultural and human sciences job sectors.

"This funding signals our ongoing commitment to create future leaders and skilled professionals in the field of agricultural innovation," said NIFA Director Sonny Ramaswamy. "By building adequate facilities we help 1890 Land-Grant Universities and Institutions sustain their programs in agriculture, food and human sciences."

The 1890 land-grant institutions

were established under the Second Morrill Act of 1890 to foster higher education opportunities for African-Americans and other underrepresented student populations. This funding opportunity aligns with NIFA's strategic goal to develop human capital, communities and a diverse workforce through research, education, extension and engagement programs in food and agricultural sciences to support a sustainable agriculture system.

Eligible applicants include Alabama A&M University, Tuskegee University, University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff, Delaware State University, Florida A&M University, Fort Valley State University, Kentucky State University, Southern University, University of Maryland-Eastern Shore, Lincoln University, Alcorn State University, North Carolina A&T State University, Central State

University, Langston University, South Carolina State University, Tennessee State University, Prairie View A&M University, Virginia State University, and West Virginia State University.

The application deadline is March 21, 2017.

See the request for applications on the NIFA 1890s Facilities Grants Program web page for more information.

Previously funded projects include an outreach and teaching facility for livestock at Tuskegee University. The university's Cooperative Extension division provides services to beef producers in the Black Belt region, a southern region that has a high percentage of African-American farmers and ranchers, and the surrounding counties. The project also provides outdoor laboratory facilities for veterinary faculty and

students. Florida A&M University completed renovations to the Quincy Teleconference Center to better serve the needs of limited-resource audiences in the community by offering programs that address educational, economic and health issues.

Since 2009, NIFA has invested in and advanced innovative and transformative initiatives to solve societal challenges and ensure the long-term viability of agriculture. NIFA's integrated research, education and extension programs support the best and brightest scientists and extension personnel whose work results in user-inspired, groundbreaking discoveries that combat childhood obesity, improve and sustain rural economic growth, address water availability issues, increase food production, find new sources of energy, mitigate climate variability and ensure food safety.

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PAINTED FINISH:

Painted is often the lowest cost finish available. Sudenga's standard painted color is blue enamel. (Custom colors, including white, gray, red and almond are available by request for a small additional fee.) The Sudenga paint process utilizes a wet electrostatic process that washes the fabricated component, primes, and then covers the part with two coats of wet polyurethane paint that then goes through an oven to bake it all on. This provides a finish that covers well and is durable and attractive. Paint can have a shorter life than galvanized finishes however, so it may be necessary to repaint a painted finish leg for cosmetic reasons before it wears out mechanically.

SHEET METAL GALVANIZED FINISH:

A sheet metal galvanized finish on your bucket elevator is a cost-effective way to get many of the benefits of a galvanized finish, without the extra steps of sending the fabricated components out to be hot-dip galvanized. Essentially, the elevator leg is fabricated at the factory out of pre-galvanized material.

Inevitably subassemblies need to be welded together. Things like leg trunking flanges, or inspection doors are almost always welded on. In the case of sheet metal galvanized fabrication, the welding process burns off the pre-galvanized finish in the area of the weld, which later needs to be painted over in that area with a zinc rich paint. Zinc rich paint coats the surface of the weld, but does not chemically bond to the weld/metal like a hot-dipped galvanized finish. This is an area one may see rust in the long term because this paint, though rich in zinc, doesn't weather as well as the integrated galvanizing.

To avoid the hassle of welding, then touching up galvanized mate-

rial, often manufacturers will choose to bolt or rivet subassemblies together as much as possible. This mechanical fastener type connection is relatively quick and easy for the manufacturer, but is typically considered lesser quality than a welded seam when it comes to elevator leg construction methods. Welding a seam often seals up a crack in a connection point that would be open in the case of a mechanical fastener connection. Dust can settle into that mechanically fastened seam, wicking in moisture that eventually can contribute to corrosion of the metal at that point.

HOT-DIPPED GALVANIZED FINISH:

Hot-dipped galvanized finish is often slightly more expensive than a sheet metal galvanized finish, but the tradeoff is worth considering as the benefits are numerous. With the hot-dipped galvanized finish choice, the components of the elevator leg are fabricated and welded, then sent off to be dipped in molten zinc. (Molten zinc makes up the galvanized coating.) Dipping the parts

after they are fabricated essentially seals up all welds, and coats everything, inside and out, in a thick coating of zinc. The steel in hot-dipped components forms a chemical bond with the zinc. This coating ensures that any scratch or ding that might get to bare metal is protected, as the properties of the zinc finish around the scratch "sacrifices" itself over time. This essentially seals the scrape off, not allowing the damage to rust or grow further. It should be noted that because fabricated components are dipped into a bath of very hot molten zinc, it is not uncommon for lighter gauges of steel to develop a slight wave on the larger flat faces of some leg trunking sections. This is generally cosmetic only and Sudenga's hot-dipped legs are designed and quality checked prior to shipping with this possibility in mind. It is wise however, to make end customers aware of this characteristic so they can decide if the long term durability of a hot-dipped finish is more important than any subtle cosmetic concerns.



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Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service
Agriculture Update

by Tom Miller, Extension Agent for Ag and Natural Resources

Farm Bill Planning Meeting

This last week I attended a planning meeting to start work on the new Farm Bill. Farm Bureau organized this working group with members from all the commodity groups like the Ky Soybean Board and the Ky Corn Growers. NRCS and the conservation side was represented as well as FSA and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

Kentucky is in a position that we have not been in for a while. Senator Mitch McConnell is a member of the Senate Ag Committee and also the Senate Majority Leader. Representative James Comer is also a new member of the House Ag Committee and being former Ky Commissioner of Agriculture and a farmer, we have a chance to have a little more influence than normal.

Of course, the meeting started with the usual discussion of separating the nutrition (Food Stamps) portion of the bill from the actual farm portion of the bill. About 87% of the current farm bill is nutrition with the rest, only 13% spread among the rest of the actual farm entities in conservation, research, farm programs, etc.

The problem is that only 35 house districts are considered rural anymore and if you took the representatives from New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles, there are more representatives from there than total districts from agriculture areas, 49 to 48. So in order to get anything through congress the nutrition portion almost has to be included.

We had a long discussion on the grain farmer part of the bill. Everyone was in agreement that no matter what happens the most important part of the bill was to keep the crop insurance portion in place. You read things about farm programs and farm subsidies and most

people are under the wrong assumption that farmers are still being paid welfare for not growing crops and keeping the prices artificially high. Those programs fell out of favor years ago, and almost all the farm payments function as some sort of insurance program.

I have some pretty strong beliefs on the 2 programs that effect Ballard County farmers the most, ARC-Co and PLC. You had to make a choice when you signed up a few years ago which program to be in. Almost all of you picked ARC - Co. That was the correct choice for corn and for soybeans, but it was not the best choice for wheat. PLC would have been a better choice for wheat, but most of our base acres are in corn, so we are still on the good side.

The problem that I see with ARC-Co is that it uses NASS data (the government ag statistic service) for determining the county yields and that data is not very accurate some years. In 2014, it was very wrong for Ballard County - probably over 20 bushels per acre high on corn. Almost all grain farmers have crop insurance and that yield data is proven and audited with scale tickets and records.

The insurance companies are not going to make a payment, until their adjusters comb through everything to determine the yield level. That insurance data (RMA data) is available and would be much more accurate to use to base an individual farmers payment on.

Another problem is with base acres. In our part of the state, it is not as big a problem as in the central parts of the state. Many fields are now in grain production that were in pasture, tobacco or other uses years ago when base acres were determined. The last farm bill did not allow the creation of

any new base acres. For example a farmer might have 500 acres of corn on the farm and only have 20 base acres counted. This is supposed to be a safety net program to help in years of low prices or low yields but if your acreage is not even covered, you have no safety net. My final gripe with the program is the use of Marketing Year Average Price. We finished the harvest season in November for our area. We know what the yields are, but we will not know what the Marketing Year Average Price is until this next October. We know when we have a loss and need some help but will not get that help until almost a year later. I think that we need some kind of shorter term price estimate to allow for payments when they still can offer some help and not be a payment that shows up in the mail box a year later and you have to wonder

what it was even for.

I was really pleased with the meeting and felt that most of my concerns were at least discussed by the group. There will be several more sessions across the state before our final recommendations come out. I will try to keep you informed of any that are in our area so we can get more farmer input into the discussions.

More discussions need to happen on the Dairy portion of the Farm Bill (the current plan is a complete disaster and needs to be changed) and discussions on other livestock programs also need to happen.

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Advancements continue in farm machinery

by Pat Thomann
kpieditor@gmail.com

Farmers in the 1700's relied on sheer strength and literal horse power to get their fields ready for planting and worked with just a horse or mule and a single row plow to plant their fields.

When steam power first appeared in the mid 1800's things began to change. In the 1870's, the self-propelled steam traction engine became popular and was used with many threshing rigs on many farms.

Gone are the days when a farmer, farmed the fields with a plow and a pair of mules. Also, pretty much gone, are the days when a farmer had to sit on a tractor in the hot sun to plow his fields.

The gender of farming has also made some drastic changes. Women in the past have been mostly in a supporting roll, bringing home cooked meals into the fields for the workers



This Case IH Steiger 500 is the latest thing in row crop farming utilizing the latest in technology to give the farmer the best outcome.

Photo by Pat Thomann

and keeping the home running smoothly while the men farmed the land.

Women today are taking a much more active roll in farming. Many

farms are solely owned and operated by women. They are not only keeping up with the business side of farming but are in the fields as much as men and women are being recognized for

their accomplishments.

Technology has come a long way in the last few decades. Many farmers now have a degree focusing on some form of agriculture and biotechnology. Farmers guide their equipment with global positioning systems (GPS) and satellite technology. The cab of tractors and combines is mostly air conditioned and has the best sound systems available. Many tractors are equipped with a Hub consisting of a touchscreen console allowing the farmer to run their tractor with the latest technology, guiding it over the fields with ease.

As drones become increasingly more popular in every aspect of our lives, it is inevitable that they will become another tool in the lives of our everyday farmers, large and small.

Instead of driving through their crops to make inspections for drought, pest and other problems,

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• Advancements in Farm Machinery

continued from page 65

a farmer can fly a drone over their crops, record what it sees and review it on a computer whenever they want. Some companies will provide this service for a fee.

Other farming innovations in the near future include livestock GPS tracking devices that can relay real time vital information on farm animals and scientist are working on technology that would make vertical farming a viable alternative where there is a shortage of farm land that are predicted to appear in the mid 2020's.

The Case IH 500 Steiger no till combine features treads that cause less ground compaction, do less damage in the field by dispersing the weight more evenly, resulting in less fuel consumption.

Jason Craig of H&R Agri-Power says, "Precision Ag utilizing GPS ca-

pabilities means less waste. More accurate planting means less waste resulting in less money spent. Row crop monitoring on planters allows planting rows with no overlap.

Self-leveling cleaning systems with more centrifugal force turning means more level cleaning and better, more even cleaning with more grain in your tank and less going out the back."

Craig also stated, "Precision Ag is a big deal. Ag is always evolving. You want to do more with less and try to get everything you can out of it but at also manage it properly. You want to get the most yield and use the least amount of fertilizer but at the end of day the good Lord is going to make it what it's going to be no matter what we do. He knows what we need. We are not smarter than He is."

Farming continues to evolve as the need arises and we will see many more changes in the future. Many of these advancements and new products can be found at the 2017 National Farm Machinery Show in Louisville Kentucky, February 15-18, 2017. If you are a farmer, this is the place to be.



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OUTDOOR TRUTHS

Gary Miller
gary@outdoortruths.org

I used to hate the thoughts of driving more than an hour or so to some destination. That seems so long ago. Now, if I have an event or hunting trip of 5 hours or less, I feel like I'm still in my neighborhood. While I regularly take off on 10 hour trips, about 7 or 8 hours of driving is about my limit for one day. What I really dread are plane flights. Since first class is out of my budget, I am relegated to the peas-

ant section that's designed for people no taller than a 10 year old. The goal is always the same – to make it to my destination within two hours of when I'm told I'll get there and that my luggage will be waiting for me as well. The new express lanes are helpful, but since 911, catching a flight has become a real experience. The list of items you cannot carry on an airplane has become comical and the security check-in is more like a strip down search. The most common picture at any airport today is the one of everyone

gathered in a small area trying to get their shoes back on.

One thing I have noticed is that I'm not being treated any different from anyone else. I may stroll in, in my camo, and take off my Lacrosse boots, but the guy in the business suit is taking his Allen Edmonds off as well. If you have any pride in who you are, it will quickly be seized, x-rayed, and detected for metal. No matter who you are, the ground around the security check-in is truly level.

Each time I endure this process,

I'm reminded of the day that all of mankind will stand before God. I imagine if there is a line it will be made of those from all walks of life, both men and women. Every race and religion will make their way to the place where everything of earthly value will be stripped away. All of our accumulated treasures will be considered an unfit evaluation of our worthiness for heaven. The only thing of value will be things of heavenly significance; namely what we did with Christ and for others. The good news is that our arrangements can be made before we arrive. Our ticket has already been bought; we just have to pick it up. It's waiting at the cross. It doesn't matter if you're in your camo or business suit, the ground around that cross is level and easily accessible for anyone who will humbly come, realize they cannot make it there on their own, and accept the free ticket that's been provided by asking this Christ into their hearts.

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Rotate crops for long-term garden health

by Anthony Keinath
Associated Press

Crop rotation may be the oldest pest management technique used in agriculture. Alternating the same crop, or related crops, in a planting bed is not just a technique for commercial farms. It is a useful pest management technique for gardens of any size, from a window box or porch pot to a small urban farm.

Rotating annual flowers should be a standard preventive practice in a sustainably managed yard. Growing the same plants in a favorite spot only every other year will help prevent the buildup of pathogens that could wipe out an entire planting. The simplest approach is to pick two favorite annuals that do well in the same environment and plant them in alternate years.

Note that the rotation interval starts when the crop is pulled up, not when it is planted. If tomatoes

planted in April are removed in July, only eight months elapses before the following spring, less than the minimum one-year rotation period.

Even if disease is not a serious problem, plants grown in a rotation usually grow more vigorously than those not rotated. Rotation also may prevent the buildup of minor root pathogens that weaken, but do not rot, roots.

History. The Romans used a simple alternate-year planting scheme for their fields, either fall-planted (winter) grain or native pasture. Around 800 A.D., a new three-year crop rotation scheme was put into practice on Charlemagne's imperial estates.

The new sequence started with winter grain in year one, spring-planted summer grain in year two, and a pasture of native grasses and other plants in year three, when the field was left untilled. Each field was cropped to grain two years out of

three, so more food could be produced.

Annual flowers

Rotation is particularly important for certain popular but disease-prone annuals. Madagascar periwinkle, commonly called vinca (*Catharanthus roseus*), is very susceptible to the soil-dwelling water molds *Pythium* and *Phytophthora* that cause stem and root rot. Rotation can prevent a serious problem from developing on vinca, but, unfortunately, probably will not eliminate these pathogens once soil is infested.

Infested soil should be turned deeply, to bury the infested top layer, and the new top layer should be amended with fresh compost. (Deep turning is not recommended for shallow topsoil over clay, though, to avoid bringing the clay to the top of the bed.) Raising the elevation of the bed to improve drainage also will reduce root diseases. Another option

is to replace the top four inches of infested topsoil or to replace all of the soil in a pot.

In another example, snapdragon leaves are susceptible to rust. Fortunately, rust spores survive less than a year in soil, so it is safe to plant "snaps" in the same spot every other year.

French marigold (*Tagetes patula*) is particularly useful as a rotation planting, as it is not only resistant to, but also antagonistic to, the root-knot nematode. Marigold makes an excellent spring successor to fall-planted snapdragon, pansy and calendula, which are susceptible to root knot.

Vegetables. Related vegetables should not be planted in the same spot more than every two or three years. Gardeners who utilize raised beds have the advantage of having "corralled" soil. As long as tools and

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• Rotate Crops for Health

continued

gloves are cleaned before working in a different bed, it is easy to keep the soil in the different beds separated to maximize the benefits of rotation.

In a large garden, say 1,000 square feet or more, space related vegetables as far apart as possible and move them around the garden year to year, since there is enough space to keep large areas of soil separate.

In a smaller garden, group and rotate plants by family to maximize soil separation. One approach is to divide the plot into quarters and rotate the different vegetable families among the quarters each season or year.

In a spring garden, assign tomatoes and their relatives to one quarter, vine crops to a second quarter, cabbage family members to a third, and other vegetables to the fourth quarter.

In a fall garden, the quarters can be planted with vegetables in the cabbage, carrot, onion and beet families.

Gardeners who rotate their annuals and vegetables plan for the long-term productivity of their soil.



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Top 5 things to consider when selecting a new Grain Dryer

Gary Woodruff, a grain conditioning applications manager for GSI, has five tips to help you select the right grain dryer for your farm:

1. Determine wet bin and dryer capacity correctly. Farmers often calculate how many bushels they harvest per hour, or the total number of bushels harvested per day divided by 24 hours. The drawback to that approach, Woodruff says, is that it's difficult for a dryer to run consistently every day for 24 hours. Instead, he recommends basing it on the actual number of bushels expected to be harvested and dried per season. Factor in some downtime, take a hard look at how many bushels will be raised and add the expected growth for the next five to 10 years. Then determine how many days your equipment will take to complete the harvest, and select a wet bin and dryer capacity that can accomplish that. "All dryer capacity ratings use wet bushels, and the USDA determines a bushel at 56 pounds, not a specific volume of grain," Woodruff says. "The dryer will actually put out dry bushels which, depending on grain moisture, will reduce those wet bushel ratings 6% to 17%, from 5- to 15-point moisture removal."

2. Increase dryer holding capac-

ity. "One common misconception is that you can simply increase the amount of wet bin holding capacity to increase the operating capacity of the dryer," Woodruff says. "But that's a short-term answer that only helps until you catch up. It doesn't actually change the capacity of the dryer at all." A better solution, he says, is to add a larger-capacity dryer that holds more bushels. "If you have a larger holding capacity and you maintain optimum airflow, not too high and not too low, you will dry the most grain possible in a given time period with good grain quality and efficiency," he explains. "It may cost a little more up front, but it is going to pay dividends every year after that."

3. Choose the right type of dryer. There's no easy answer to the question of which dryer is best for your farm, he says. "It depends on a number of factors that vary by farm. They include how many bushels will come through the system, if some bins are already in place and how much labor is available. These and any other factors need to be discussed and considered in the final decision. As a general guideline, if you need to dry up to a maximum of 100,000 bushels, an in-bin system, such as a low-temp stirrator or floor



discharge bin, may do the job. Starting at around 75,000 and going up to 750,000 bushels, a portable stack or roof bin dryer, or modular tower, will be among the possibilities. For 750,000 or more bushels, larger equipment, such as a tower dryer, will be required."

4. Focus on return on investment, not just cost. "Farmers often worry a lot about the initial investment, but it's important to also pay attention to how efficient the dryer is. Will it enable you to get your harvest out of the field early to increase yield, and then get the grain dried in optimum time to protect grain quality and maximize market value? All

of these things have to be looked at to figure the true cost benefit," he says.

5. Make decisions for the long term. Grain dryers typically last 20 to 30 years. It is important to plan for growth. "The most recent estimates show that U.S. farms are increasing yields by 2% to 3% annually," Woodruff says. "Ten years down the road, you may have 30% more corn, even if you don't buy or rent any additional acres. So you need to make sure that buying a grain dryer is a long-term decision. Select one that will take care of your needs for a long enough period of time, which is usually not less than 10 years."

To learn more about GSI products, visit www.grainsystems.com or contact Perry Farm Supply, in Palmersville, TN, at 731.822.4415.

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